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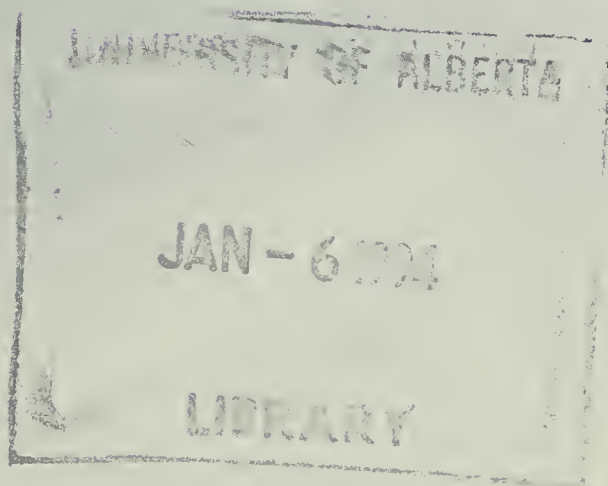
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BLUE JAY

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December 1993



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THE SACHEM: A NEW SKIPPER FOR MANITOBA AND THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES

PETER TAYLOR, Box 597, Pinawa, Manitoba. R0E 1L0

The afternoon of 9 July 1991 was ideal for butterfly watching in south-eastern Manitoba — sunny, but not too warm, with light winds and plenty of moisture after a wet weekend. I spent much of the afternoon counting and photographing butterflies along Provincial Road 308, south of East Braintree. This lightly used stretch of gravel road passes through a variety of forest habitats, and is about 60 km from the nearest extensive agricultural region.

Of particular interest was a small, newly discovered population of the Baltimore, *Euphydryas phaeton* (Drury), a rare species in Manitoba.^{4,6,10} Among the skippers, the Dun Skipper, *Euphyes ruricola* (Boisduval), was exceptionally common, and there were also numbers of the European Skipper, *Thymelicus lineola* (Ochsenheimer) and a few individuals of the Long Dash, *Polites mystic* (W.H. Edwards).

One roadside patch of Canada Thistle, *Cirsium arvense* (L.) Scop., about 18 km s.s.e. of East Braintree (49° 30'N, 95° 32'W) had attracted a fine variety of butterflies. While engaged in photography I noticed an unfamiliar skipper nectaring on a thistle flower. Large and robust, relative to the three species listed above, it resembled a female *Hesperia*. It was quite worn and faded, and the most prominent features were two large, almost transparent spots near the centre of each forewing. I obtained a series of six photographs before the skipper flew away, after which it could not be relocated.

Comparison of the slides with plates in Opler and Krizek's *Butterflies East of the Great Plains* led to the tentative identification of this skipper as a female Sachem (sometimes spelled Satchem and also known as Field Skipper), *Atalopedes campestris* (Boisduval).⁷ The photographs did not match well with any known Manitoban species.⁴ I therefore sought advice in confirming the skipper's identity.

Two Manitoban lepidopterists, Paul Klassen and Richard Westwood, agreed that the identification could be correct, but suggested that I seek an opinion from an authority more familiar with the species. Four slides were sent to Paul Opler (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fort Collins, Colorado), who confirmed the skipper's identification as a female Sachem. Two of these slides, showing dorsal views of the skipper, are reproduced here.

The Sachem is resident across much of the southern United States from Virginia to California and south to Brazil.^{7,9} It is a temporary summer visitor and sporadic breeder as far north as southern Ontario and much of the northern United States, and it has been recorded in British Columbia.^{1,2,5,7,8,9} In North Dakota, McCabe and Post distinguish two flight periods, 10 June-25 July and 25 August-5 October; the Manitoba record lies well within the former period.⁵ While there is general agreement that the Sachem cannot withstand severe winters, McCabe



Female Sachem near East Braintree, MB, 9 July 1991; dorsal view.

Peter Taylor

and Post suggest that winter survival may be possible in the southern badlands of North Dakota.⁵ They note that the spring brood is absent after harsh winters, but can be abundant in June after mild winters.

Although their distribution map shows specimen locations only in the southern third of North Dakota, McCabe and Post indicate that the Sachem may occur as far north as the Pembina Hills and Turtle Mountains in good years; these regions adjoin Manitoba.⁵ Royer shows one additional specimen location in Grand Forks County, about 100 km from the Manitoba border, and 200 km s.w. of the East Braintree site.⁸ Seasonal reports published by the Lepidopterists' Society indicate that the Sachem staged a significant flight into the north-central United States in late June and early July 1991.⁶ The species was reported from seven Wisconsin counties, in-

cluding four new county records, and two new county records were reported for North Dakota. Of particular interest was a report from Kittson Co., at the northwestern extremity of Minnesota, only about 120 km. s.w. of East Braintree, on 26 June 1991.⁶

It is possible that some Manitoba records of the Assiniboia Skipper, *Hesperia comma assiniboia* (Lyman), for 22 June to 11 July, which are questioned by Klassen et al., are referable to female Sachems.⁴ The female Sachem is well illustrated in several sources,^{5,7,8} but many of the commonly used field guides lack illustrations or detailed descriptions, making identification difficult. Furthermore, the insect is quite variable, and the individual illustrated in Howe's *Butterflies of North America* is extremely dark.³

Given the wide-ranging, sporadic northward movements of the Sachem,



Female Sachem near East Braintree, MB, 9 July 1991; dorsal view.

Peter Taylor

its occurrence in Manitoba from time to time would not be surprising. The worn condition of the individual described here is consistent with long-distance immigration. Sachem larvae feed on various grasses, including Crabgrass (*Digitaria* sp.), so breeding in Manitoba may be possible if the Sachem ever reaches the province in sufficient numbers.⁷

I thank Paul Klassen, Brian McKillop, Paul Opler, Bill Preston and Richard Westwood for their help and advice in verifying and documenting this record.

1. EBNER, J.A. 1970. The butterflies of Wisconsin. Milwaukee Public Museum Popular Science Handbook No. 12. 205 pp.
2. GREGORY, W.W. 1983. A revised check-list of the butterflies and skippers of Canada (*Lepidoptera*). Lyman Entomol. Mus. and Res. Lab. Memoir No. 14, p. 4.
3. HOWE, W. H. 1975. The butterflies of North America. Doubleday, Garden City, New York. 633 pp.
4. KLASSEN, P., A.R. WESTWOOD, W.B. PRESTON and W.B. MCKILLOP. 1989. The butterflies of Manitoba. Manitoba Mus. of Man and Nature, Winnipeg. 290 pp.
5. MCCABE, T.L. and R.L. POST. 1977. Skippers (*Hesperioidea*) of North Dakota (with additional records of North Dakota butterflies and a butterfly calendar). Dept. of Entomol. Agr. Expt. Stn. N. D. State Univ. 70 pp.
6. MCKOWN, S. (editor). 1992. 1991 season summary. *News of the Lepidopterists' Society* No. 2, Kansas. Mar/Apr 1992.
7. OPLER, P.A. and G.O. KRIZEK. 1984. Butterflies east of the Great Plains: an illustrated natural history. Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore. 294 pp.
8. ROYER, R.A. 1988. Butterflies of North Dakota: an atlas and guide. Minot State Univ. Sci. Monograph No. 1. 192 pp.
9. SCOTT, J.A. 1986. The butterflies of North America: a natural history and field guide. Stanford Univ. Press, Stanford, California. 583 pp.
10. TAYLOR, P. 1991. Baltimores and Turtleheads. *Bull. Man. Nat. Soc.* 16(9):13.

GRASSLANDS NATIONAL PARK INSECT COLLECTION

KEN PIVNICK, 209 - 7th Street East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7H 0W9

In Canada, there are estimated to be approximately 54,600 insect species, 1,400 spider species, 9,500 mite species and 1,000 related terrestrial arthropods. Only half of these have been named and described.¹ Forty percent and four percent of the total number (about 26,000 and 2,600; these are gross estimates only) may be present in Saskatchewan and in the Grasslands National Park (GNP) area, respectively. For many groups of insects, the Northern Great Plains (the Canadian Prairies and northern plains states where the park is situated) is an area of little study and there are expected to be many undescribed species found here.

Of all these species, 302 identified species are found in an insect collection made in the GNP from 1987-90 by the Entomological Society of Saskatchewan (ESS). It was made mainly through volunteer effort, with some financial assistance from the Saskatchewan Natural History Society in 1987. The collection was turned over to the park in April 1993 and is presently housed at the Park Interpretive Centre in Val Marie, Saskatchewan.

There are about another 25 species presently being identified by taxonomists in Ottawa. These will be forwarded to the park at a later date by Ron Hooper of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM) in Regina. Specimens of about 20 other species collected have been retained for the insect collection of the RSM and the private spider collection of Don J. Buckle of Saskatoon, (the best collections in Saskatchewan of insects and spiders, respectively) because they did not have these species. Additionally, there is a substantial number of un-

identified species in the collection, particularly in the Diptera (flies) and the Hymenoptera (bees, wasps, and sawflies), because there is no expertise locally in their identification.

Included is a list of the identified species found in the collection. It notes which of these (primarily mayflies and spiders) are not pinned but are found in vials of alcohol because of their delicate nature. Also attached are more extensive notes on the taxonomy, ecology and habits of some of the major groups: 1) the spiders and other arachnids by Don Buckle; 2) the aquatic insects, including the dragonflies, damselflies, caddisflies, alderflies and mayflies, by Eric Whiting; and 3) a short note on the Orthoptera (grasshoppers and crickets) by Murray Braun.

It is worth noting that 33 species of grasshoppers (family Acrididae) are in the collection, and many other grasshopper species are found in the park. Some of these are quite beautiful in colour. Only four Saskatchewan species are pests.

Also with the collection are more complete species lists of the Coleoptera (beetles) and Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) which includes all verified records of species found in the GNP area. It has been compiled by Ron Hooper of the RSM and most species are to be found in the RSM collection.

1. DANKS, H. 1979. Canada and its insect fauna. *Memoirs of the Entomological Society of Canada* No. 108. 573 pp.

ROADS KILLS OF MIGRATING GARTER SNAKES AT THE PAS, MANITOBA

WALTER KRIVDA, Box 864, The Pas, Manitoba. R9A 1K8

On 1 September 1991, a special trip was made to the Landry Lake area to collect plant specimens and to look for Fairy Bells (*Disporum trachycarpum*). A single colony of some eight plants was found 4 mi. west of Landry Lake, on the gravel road to Moose Lake, about 62 mi. northeast of The Pas. Another colony of somewhat more robust plants was found near Frog Creek. These are slight range extensions locally. As a spin-off from the botanical trip some observations were made on the dead and dying snakes found on the highway. These observations are recorded here.

In the course of travelling between Frog Creek and Landry Lake, I counted 32 dead garter snakes on 20 mi. of gravel road. In the remaining 10 mi. from the railway track where Highway 287 and the Moose Lake Road meet, another 10 garter snakes were found on the road to The Pas, near the airport. A total of 42 crushed, dead snakes were counted in this stretch of 30 miles.

The area near the airport has long been known as a garter snake winter denning area. The limestone dens have never been found, but were reportedly known to the late Fred Kowalchuk, who ran a summer store on the beach area for many years. The area between Landry Lake and Frog Creek, on the Moose Lake

Road, is reported here for the first time as a likely winter snake denning area.

The dead snakes were on the small side, perhaps averaging 18 inches. Only two were juveniles — one very thin and 14 in. long, and the other only as thick as a pencil and perhaps a foot long.

Two of the less damaged, road-killed snakes were repeatedly washed in rain water until blood ceased to appear in the wash water. This removed all the grit and gravel from the wounds. The two specimens have been liquid preserved and added to my collection. The label contains the following data: "Taken between Landry Lake and Frog Creek, near The Pas, Manitoba. September 1st, 1991. Collector: Walter Kridva, George Cook."

As an afterthought, the smallest snake seen, which was only as thick as a pencil, has also been added to the aforementioned jar of liquid preservative.

Local road kills of garter snakes by the airport, in particular, have been going on for over 50 years now. In this time vast numbers of snakes have been killed by the passing traffic. The major area is only about two miles long on Highway 287 near the airport.

Signs should be put up, alerting drivers. The traffic should be slowed in this stretch of road, as this would likely decrease the carnage, both spring and autumn.

The place could be made a tourist attraction, instead of one where snakes are relentlessly slaughtered. The garter snake is the only snake species we have this far north in the province.

Everyone interested in snake conservation at this site should write: The Mayor of The Pas, the Mayor's

Office, Town Hall, The Pas, Manitoba. R9A 1K8

In the early 1960s some 3,000 to 5,000 snakes were collected yearly by the airport for a local export company. This was halted by the government of the day on the protestations of the Manitoba Naturalists' Society. The snakes were sold at 35 cents each, mostly to American universities, where they were used in zoology classes in medical schools to illustrate an intricate nervous system. I have this information from a local snake exporter.

ERRATA

In the June 1993 *Blue Jay* (51: 127), E. Otto Hohn wrote a letter about how squirrels carry their young, which had errors in the reference to a

book. The correct reference is T. Bouliere. 1960. *Natural History of mammals*, 2nd Edition. Alfred Knopf, New York. P. 178.



It was not long, however, before the grasses of England appeared in the Colonies. On shipboard the animals were fed the forage provided them, and when they were landed the ships were cleared of litter and manure. The grasses thus introduced spread rapidly and in a few generations came to be regarded as indigenous. *E.E. Edwards, 1948. Grass: the Yearbook of Agriculture. Washington.*

A LATE NESTING OF THE GREAT GRAY OWL

DOUG COLLISTER, 3425 Lane Crescent Southwest, Calgary, Alberta, T3E 5X2 and HOWARD GILES, 2824 18th Street Northwest, Calgary, Alberta. T2M 3V1

On 14 August 1991, Howard Giles was hiking in Crimson Lake Provincial Park in west central Alberta when he heard the squawking of a young owl. Upon investigation, a downy chick was located on an abandoned Northern Goshawk nest \pm 12 m up in an aspen. Nearby was an adult Great Gray Owl.

Table 1 details all subsequent visits to the nest by Howard Giles and Eloise McDonald (Crimson Lake Pro-

vincial Park naturalist) and her staff.

Based on a survey of the literature, this appears to be an unusually late nesting record for the Great Gray Owl. Karalus and Eckhart indicate a latest egg-laying date for the Great Gray Owl of 19 July, with the norm being 9 April through 1 May.² Jim Duncan, a doctoral candidate working on Great Gray Owls under Dr. Robert Nero in Manitoba, indicated that as of 1991 he was unaware of



Great Gray Owl at nest.

Doug Collister

Table 1. OBSERVATIONS OF GREAT GRAY OWL NEST AT CRIMSON LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK, 1991

Date	Observations
15 August	2 adults, 2 chicks on nest
16 August	2 adults, 2 chicks on nest
17 August	2 adults, 2 chicks on nest
19 August	2 adults, 2 chicks on nest
22 August	1 adult, 1 chick on nest
24 August	1 adult, 1 chick on nest
26 August	1 chick near nest
30 August	no birds detected

any Great Gray Owl nest in south-eastern Manitoba containing young past mid-July. Osborne felt that the Great Gray Owl nests he found with young on 5 July 1987 were very late.⁴ Terres suggests eggs can be laid in Alberta from 23 March to mid-May and in Arctic Canada from mid-May to July.⁵

We were unable to find any reference to double brooding by the Great Gray Owl but replacement breeding has been recorded in Sweden. Hoglund and Lansgren (in Mikkola 1983) found a nest with eggs at the beginning of May.³ Later, on 28 May, the nest was empty but on 4 June it contained two eggs and by 19 June the clutch numbered four.³

Incubation period for the Great Gray Owl is 28-30 days and nestlings leave the nest at 21-28 days of age.^{2,1} Using the approximate time of

leaving the nest as 21 August from Table 1, the Crimson Lake owls hatched somewhere around 1 August while the eggs were laid approximately 1 July. Thus, this nesting is one of the latest on record.

1. HARRISON, C. 1978. A field guide to the nests, eggs and nestlings of North American birds. Collins. 416 pp.
2. KARALUS, K.E. and E.W. ECKHART. 1987. The owls of North America (North of Mexico). Weathervane Books, New York. 278 pp.
3. MIKKOLA, H. 1983. The owls of Europe. T&AD Poyser, Calton, England. 397 pp.
4. OSBORNE, T.O. 1987. Biology of the Great Gray Owl in interior Alaska. Pp. 91-95 in Biology and conservation of northern forest owls; symposium proceedings. USDA Forest Service General Technical Report RM-142, Fort Collins, CO.
5. TERRES, J.K. 1980. The Audubon encyclopedia of North American birds. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 1109 pp.



THE PHOTOGRAPHS I NEVER GOT!

KEITH BARR, 40 Richardson Crescent, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4S 4J3

You should see some of my photographs I never got. I have had trouble taking pictures from day one! I was given a 35mm range finder camera way back in 1957. With this type of camera you have to focus, set the speed, read the light meter and set the aperture. Here is what happened the first time I went to take a picture:

I see a large bird sitting on the ground in an open field. I approach and get quite close. While trying to set everything right on my camera, two men approach the bird, get inside it and fly away. Oh, did I forget to mention that this was a whirly bird? As the helicopter flies away I am still trying to get my camera set right.

Twenty years later . . . different camera . . . still problems. I am in Wascana Park when I see my first Varied Thrush. I would like to get a picture of this bird so I drive home and get the camera, 600-mm lens and a roll of film. So as not to waste time, I load the film in the camera while waiting at a red traffic light. Back at the park I take several photos of the Varied Thrush. I am sure these pictures will be the envy of *National Geographic* photographers. But I have not made sure that the film was loaded properly for, as I took 28 exposures on a 24-exposure roll, I realized it had not advanced at all!

Then I got a camera that does it all (almost) ... you just focus and the camera does the rest. There is a

Townsend Solitaire in the juniper that surrounds the museum. I have my trusty camera with me and am able to get close enough to the bird so that it fills the whole frame. I take several pictures. These will be excellent pictures, as no branches hide any part of the bird. I can see the white eye ring and the buff colour on the side and it is just the right angle! During the coming week I take several more pictures. I happen to check the counter and see that it is at 27. Oh! I must have a 36 exposure roll in the camera. A few weeks later, the counter shows 39. My heart sinks all the way to my toes when I open the camera and find that all my beautiful pictures are not to be. I have no film in the camera!

It is spring and I am going bird-watching. I grab my two faithless cameras. I know there is film in the camera with the short telephoto lens but no film in the camera with the long 600-mm lens. I put this camera in the trunk of the car as it is too heavy to carry. I have made several stops along the way. Now I stop at a slough and spot a Red-necked Grebe, uncommon in this area. It is quite close to the road. It is feeding and stays under the water about 20 seconds each time it dives. I jump out of the car, open the trunk, grab the camera with the long 600-mm lens and get back into the car before the grebe surfaces. I take several shots of this male red-neck. That evening, my wife and I are sitting watching T.V. All of a sudden I start to laugh. My wife looks at me rather oddly, as there is only a dull

commercial on the screen. She asks me what I am laughing at. I tell her about the fantastic pictures I took of the Red-necked Grebe and how just now I remembered that the camera I had used had no film in it!

Now I have a camera that really does everything. All you do is put the film in, shut the back and it loads the film. It automatically sets the speed, the aperture and even focuses automatically! All I should have to do is

point and push the button. But which button? It has several little buttons and switches that you can push so that it will do different things, like take five pictures a second. So now instead of just one lousy picture, I get five lousy pictures of the same thing! I also find that since I have had this new camera, I seem to be buying more film. But at least now I know that I will get a picture no matter how bad!



ANNOUNCEMENT

SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTMAS BIRD AND MAMMAL COUNTS - 1993

The dates for the Christmas Bird and Mammal counts this year are Friday, 17 December 1993, through Monday, 3 January 1994, inclusive. Count area should be a circle 24 km (15 mi.) in diameter. Counts must be a minimum of three hours in duration. An information package, including count forms, will be mailed to all previous count compilers in early December. Anyone wishing to initiate a new count should contact:

Wayne C. Harris
Box 414, Raymore, Saskatchewan. S0A 3J0
Phone (306) 746-4544 (answering machine)
Fax (306) 746-4519

All counts must arrive by Monday, 10 January 1994, to be included in the compilation scheduled to appear in the March 1994 Blue Jay.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS OF ALBINISM IN BIRDS

JEAN BANCROFT, 306 - 200 Tuxedo Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba. R3P 0R3

Since my last publication, there have been several additional reports in *Blue Jay* regarding albinism in birds (Table 1).¹

During the summer and fall of 1991, Miles Constable observed "a grey and white-coloured version" of a magpie in central Edmonton, Alberta.²

Daisy Meyers of Leader, Saskatchewan, sighted a very pale grey American Crow in a large flock of the usual black crows, 27 August 1991.³ She also saw an albino Canada Goose grazing on her ranch, 1 June 1981, in a flock of 20 normal Canadas.³ On several occasions a partial albino Ring-necked Pheasant appeared on her ranch, but she did not keep note of the dates.³

In September 1991, Therese Ethier of Hoey, Saskatchewan, ob-

served a Brewer's Blackbird with an all-white head (pers. comm.).

On 11 September 1992, Frances Vyse reported the sighting of a white crow in Kamloops, British Columbia, for nearly a year.⁶

In January 1990, Elaine Radwanski of Archerwill, Saskatchewan, spotted a white-headed redpoll in a flock of Common and Hoary Redpolls.⁴

Ernie Taylor of Grand Marais, Manitoba, noticed a partial albino American Robin beside a bird bath in his yard in October 1992 (pers. comm.). Half of the bird's back feathers were white and about a third of the upper part of its breast was white.

Ivey and Norma Simmons of Kerrville, Texas, on 29 January 1992

Table 1. ALBINO BIRD SIGHTINGS	
Species	No. of records
American Crow	2
Black-billed Magpie	1
Canada Goose	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	1
Redpoll	1
American Robin	2
Double-crested Cormorant	1
Dark-eyed Junco	1
White-throated Sparrow	1
Brewer's Blackbird	1
Ten species	12 records

sighted an American Robin which was all white except for its red breast.⁵

In the fall of 1991 John Dennis of Maryland observed an albino Double-crested Cormorant in Outer Banks, North Carolina.

A report by Peter Whelan mentioned that two albinos had appeared at a Nova Scotia feeder — a Dark-eyed Junco in early April 1992, and a White-throated Sparrow “earlier in the winter [1991]” (pers. comm.).

1. BANCROFT, J. 1991. Observations of albinism in birds. *Blue Jay* 49:139-140.

2. CONSTABLE, M. 1991. Albino magpie near Edmonton. *Blue Jay* 50:125.

3. MEYERS, D. 1991. More albino birds. *Blue Jay* 50:62-63.

4. RADWANSKI, E. 1990. White-headed redpoll near Archerwill, Saskatchewan. *Blue Jay* 49:141.

5. SIMMONS, I. and N. Simmons. 1992. Saw an albino robin. *Nature Society News*. March 1992. p. 8.

6. VYSE, F. 1992. White crow sighted, Kamloops, British Columbia. *Winnipeg Free Press*, 11 September 1992.

7. WHELAN, P. 1992. The birding bonuses of a cold April day. *Globe and Mail*, 18 April 1992.



SOME ALBINO BIRDS FROM AVONLEA

FLOSSIE BOGDAN, Box 207, Avonlea, Saskatchewan. S0H 0C0

22 and 23 September 1991: A white sparrow was observed from my kitchen window. It had some brown on tips of wings and at end of tail, black head stripes and yellow lores. The yellow lores helped to identify it as a partial albino White-throated Sparrow (see illustration).

20 September 1990: A partial albino starling on the power line. It was being fed (along with two young starlings) by an adult starling (see

illustration).

The power lines are all underground now. In the fall we miss seeing the 200 to 300 swallows all lined up like clothes pins on the lines.

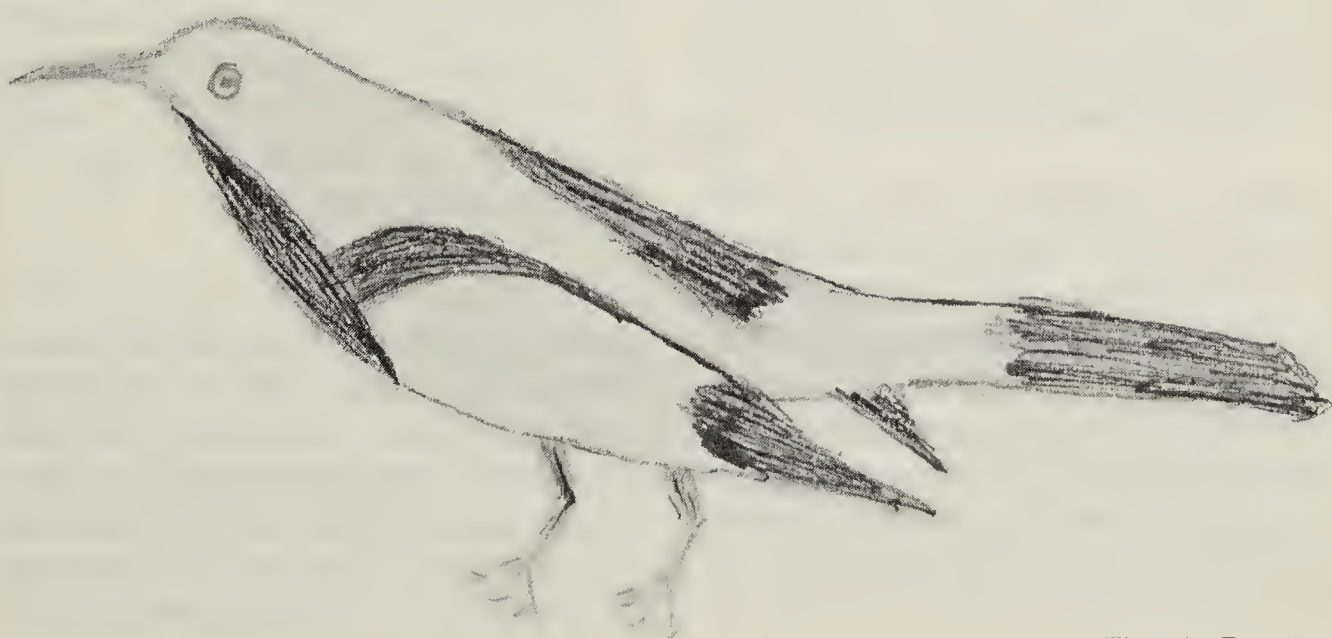
In 1985, we saw an albino grackle. It was a very wary bird. We could only observe it from the window of the trailer as it fed on crumbs on the picnic table.



*Partial albino starling on
power line, 1990. Flossie Bogdan*



*Partial albino White-throated
Sparrow, 1991. Flossie Bogdan*



Albino grackle, 1985.

Flossie Bogdan

BLACK GUILLEMOT SEEN IN REGINA

FRANK BRAZIER, 2657 Cameron Street, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4T 2W5

November 26, 1988, was a bitterly cold day with a strong, gusting, northeast wind. Blowing snow reduced visibility. The Canada Geese remaining on Wascana Lake in Regina had kept an ice-free area, fairly large in extent, to the east of Spruce Island. Fred Lahrman (retired from the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History) stood on the old abutment of the Broad Street bridge when he saw a strange bird among the geese. Several times he saw it dive in a manner he had not seen before.

The next day was a Sunday, a sunny day, -22°C with a strong northwest wind. Trevor Herriot telephoned me to tell me of the strange bird. I went there at once and found Fred, and Robert Kreba, a knowledgeable staff member of the museum, who had identified it as a Black Guillemot in winter plumage.

While we watched the guillemot, an adult Bald Eagle arrived. It perched on a tall spruce overlooking the open water but did not attack any of the birds, much to our relief.

When I returned home, I telephoned Stan Shadick in Saskatoon who brought a party to Regina in time to see the guillemot. I also telephoned Peter Whelan, who writes the bird column for the *Globe and Mail* and told him of our extraordinary visitor. I went to Moose Jaw after dinner and there telephoned Pat Kern who also brought a party of

friends along to see the bird. A good number of Regina birders saw it and I learned that Brian Rainey had ventured out on the ice with a camera but he alarmed the bird and it flew off. The photographs turned out to be excellent, and put the Black Guillemot on the confirmed list of Saskatchewan birds.

Discussing the identification problem with Robert Kreba recently, I learned that he had relied mostly on Harrison to name it and to distinguish it from its relative the Pigeon Guillemot.¹ The text stresses that the Black Guillemot has unmarked white secondary coverts (which show as conspicuous patches in the photographs) and has white axillaries and underwing coverts as opposed to the gray ones of the Pigeon Guillemot. The winter adult Black Guillemot head is mostly white, crown and lores are mottled with black, and upper parts mottled gray and white. The Pigeon Guillemot in winter is much the same, but its wing patches have black markings. For those without access to Harrison's book there is an excellent picture of a Black Guillemot in winter plumage in Robbins *et al.*, page 149.²

Our Black Guillemot got an incidental mention in *Blue Jay* by a personal letter from Robert Kreba to Jacques Sirois, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife, NWT. It deserves better than that. It was the first species of the family Alcidae to be identified in Saskatchewan and it



Black Guillemot, Regina, 1988.

Brian Rainey

was a "lifer" for many of us. As one of the early observers, I am reporting the occurrence of this rare visitor for the benefit of the members of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society.

I wish to thank Fred Lahrman for the use of his personal notes on the observation, Robert Kreba for much pertinent information, and Brian

Rainey for the use of his photographs.

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In 1855 a famous Squamish American Indian Chief, Seatl, after whom Seattle, Washington is named, said words that to-day are even more appropriate: "What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, man would die from great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beasts also happens to man. All things are connected." *John Carroll, 1991. "Birds, Beasts and Flowers."*

A GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL SEEN IN REGINA

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S4S 3C1

The morning of 16 April 1993 was sunny at about 9 a.m. when I did some bird-watching at the Display Ponds. These are located east of the Centre of the Arts, Regina, across Lakeshore Drive in that part of Wascana Park between Wascana Parkway on the west and Highway No. 1 by-pass on the east.

There was the usual collection of Ring-billed Gulls and Canada Geese. I then noticed that the geese were staring at something far overhead. I had observed this habit before and each time it turned out to be a high-flying raptor. This time I discovered it to be a bird at such a height that I could not determine the kind. As I watched, it came lower until I could see that it was a gull. I had an excellent view as it flew quite low over the marsh and at times at quite close range. Description is as follows: dark tail, light rump, uniform gray-brown mantle, wings and head, gray bill with black tip, no black wing-tips, pale whitish underwing.

I remembered that Frank Brazier had a book which showed photographs of gulls in colour in various plumages so I telephoned him and asked him to bring it the next morning to our regular coffee session, which he did. I went through the gull section and identified my bird as a Glaucous-winged Gull in second winter plumage; its photograph matched exactly the gull I saw. I had seen this species some years ago in Victoria, B.C., but not in this plumage.

The book is called *Seabirds of the World: a Photographic Guide* by Peter Harrison (1987. Christopher Helm, London). One previous record is listed in my copy of *Field Checklist of Saskatchewan Birds*, 7th Edition, October 1990, compiled by Robert Kreba, Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

I wish to thank Frank Brazier for the use of his book and for helpful suggestions about the text of this article.



As the cost of timber for traditional types of fences became almost prohibitive, resort was made to sod fences, smooth wire, and Osage-orange hedges, but the problem of fences on the prairies remained essentially unsolved until the invention of barbed wire in 1874 — a simple thing, but one of great significance. *E.E. Edwards, 1948. Grass: the Yearbook of Agriculture. Washington.*

FIRST VERIFIED RECORD OF WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER FOR ALBERTA

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On 23 June 1992, Beverley Lane found a bird on the ground beside a medical lab building at 2480-39 Avenue Northeast in Calgary. The bird had apparently flown into the dark, reflective, mirror windows of the building and killed itself. Bev tentatively identified the bird as a female Williamson's Sapsucker. Because of this identification, and the fact that the bird had only recently died and was in fresh condition, Bev took the specimen to the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary. Staff at the sanctuary confirmed the identification and froze the specimen.

The specimen has been deposited in the Natural History Section at the Provincial Museum of Alberta in Edmonton, where it is catalogued as #93.6.1. All the diagnostic features of a female Williamson's Sapsucker are readily observable — head is brown; back, wings and sides are barred with dark brownish-black and white; rump is white; belly has a narrow yellow patch; and the breast has a black patch. The exposed culmen measured 21 mm and the wing chord 134.7 mm.

Prior to this record, the Williamson's Sapsucker was considered hypothetical for Alberta based on two sight records. Both observations were from Waterton Lakes National Park, a logical place in Alberta for occurrences of this southwestern species. C. H. Young is said to have seen one on 17 May 1922, and a male became "trapped" in a garage

in Waterton and was observed at very close range on 11 April 1967.^{4,5} In Saskatchewan there have also been a few records of this species. A specimen was collected on 30 May 1965 in Moose Mountain Provincial Park, and there is a sight record from Saskatoon on 23 August 1977.³

In North America, the Williamson's Sapsucker breeds locally from extreme southern interior British Columbia south in the Cascades, Sierra Nevada and Rockies to southern California, central Arizona and southern New Mexico.¹ It winters adjacent to its breeding range at lower elevations south to Texas and central Mexico. Williamson's Sapsucker had also been recorded as accidental east of its breeding range with reports from southern Saskatchewan, Oklahoma and west-central Texas. There are also sightings from Minnesota, South Dakota, Kansas and east-central Texas.

In Canada, the breeding distribution of Williamson's Sapsucker is restricted to extreme southern British Columbia, where two subspecies are recognized.³ The nominate subspecies, *thyroideus*, breeds in the Okanagan region of British Columbia east to Midway. Subspecies *nataliae* breeds in the East Kootenays of British Columbia, and may no longer occur in that province with the last breeding record at Cranbrook in 1938, and the most recent record in July 1947 at Cranbrook.²

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THE URBAN ROCK WREN

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S7N 1C2

I usually do a lot of bird-watching in Saskatoon during the last two weeks of August each year, as this is when the fall warbler migration peaks. It was one of these warbler-watching days, 20 August 1991, which provided me with an unusual "birding" experience.

It was high noon and blazing hot when I returned home after a short but exhausting walk through Cosmopolitan Park, along the east bank of the South Saskatchewan River. Although the park is just a short distance from where I live, the heat made the outing simply unbearable. However, after finding many species of migratory songbirds, I felt well rewarded for my effort.

After eagerly gulping down a litre of iced tea, I decided to step outside onto my balcony, which overlooks the backyard from an elevation of approximately 4 m. Its strategic loca-

tion offers an excellent vantage point for spotting sneaky birds moving through the yard. The sun was blazing off the east-facing deck, making the surface temperature resemble that of hot coals! There did not seem to be much bird activity in the yard which was unusual for that time of year. However, I soon noticed some movement to my left and there, hanging upside down from the stucco wall of my neighbour's house, was a rather content looking Rock Wren.

The bird soon flew onto the roof of the house and hopped into the eaves trough where I could hear it clawing and scratching as it explored the length of it. Upon reaching the end, it climbed over the edge of the trough and landed on the side of the house again. The bird repeated this action several times as I stood less than 4 m away, quite amused, needless to say.

However, my amusement ended abruptly as I thought to myself, "Now who is going to believe this?" I phoned my brother Guy, who, after I did some convincing, said he would come over. However, he decided to run a few errands on the way, and did not arrive until a full hour later, shaking his head at my enthusiastic description of what had happened. Of course, I had not seen the wren since our phone call, but by now there were numerous birds moving through the yard so I convinced him to stay and check things out.

Patiently, we sat out in the heat swilling Kool-Aid like a couple of seven-year-olds until, remarkably, the Rock Wren suddenly reappeared

90 minutes after the original sighting! It was exploring the dead branch of a large elm that hangs over the balcony. We were directly beneath the bird and watched as it worked its way down the branch, upside down in a nuthatch-like fashion. When it reached the main trunk of the tree, the wren flew away, this time for good.

Since there is an obvious lack of Rock Wren habitat in Saskatoon, I suppose the stucco-coated house was the closest thing to a rocky outcropping the bird could find. My suggestion is, if you live in or near one of these houses, keep your eyes open for the elusive urban Rock Wren.



MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD NESTS IN CLOTHES DRYER VENT

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On 14 and 15 June 1993, I stayed at a government bunkhouse in Aes-
sippi Provincial Park, northwest of
Riding Mountain National Park. I
found Mountain Bluebirds nesting in
a clothes dryer vent and in a bird
house on a power pole some 30 m in
front of the building.

The dryer vent was an aluminum
tube 9 cm in diameter and 60 cm
long, attached to a semitransparent
plastic tube which led to the dryer.
The plastic flap covering the outside
end of the vent had fallen off leaving

an entrance hole 30 cm above
ground. Nesting material filled the
plastic tube toward the dryer end 15
cm from where it intersected with the
aluminum pipe. Three nestlings
nested on shallow material up
against the nest bulk.

No one had stayed at the bunk-
house until 7 June and the dryer had
not been used in 1993. Despite an
area cleanup on 15 June (shrubs
trimmed and grass cut), the adult
birds continued to attend their young.

The room where the dryer sat lacked windows, and because the plastic tube was semitransparent, on a bright day it was possible to see the adults feeding their young. I removed the plastic pipe from the aluminum tube for a short period on 15 June to study the young and the nesting material. The hatchlings were about three days from fledging at that time.

It was not surprising to find a hole-nesting bird adapting to a man-made structure but it was noteworthy that the opening was no more than 30 cm above the ground and the nest was at least 65 cm inside the opening.

Criddle commented on the Mountain Bluebird adaptability as follows: "The male bird is an extreme optimist and nearly any hole meets with his approval. The male actively seeks out holes for future nests and pokes his head into various places."³ Bent states, "Almost any cavity and almost any location seems to suit them. They have been recorded nesting in stream banks (old kingfisher nest chambers) and in stubs nearly nine metres above the

ground. Cliff crevices, rocks, and almost any cavity are possible nesting sites, especially if near human habitations and ranches. They also have been known to take over Cliff Swallow nests, chipmunk holes and they will nest inside buildings."¹ In the Okanagan valley they have nested in many strange locations including an active sawmill wall, an abandoned electrical generator radiator, and a cattle guard that was driven over continually.²

In southwestern Manitoba, the Mountain Bluebird is largely confined to using nest boxes, but when boxes are not available they can adapt to a number of alternative sites.

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"Everybody knows," one naturalist has written, "that the autumn landscape in the north woods is the land, plus a red maple, plus a ruffed grouse. In terms of conventional physics, the grouse represents only a millionth of either the mass or the energy of an acre. Yet subtract the grouse and the whole thing is dead." Aldo Leopold, 1949. *A Sand County Almanac*. Oxford.

A TRUE ALBINO LITTLE BROWN BAT, *MYOTIS LUCIFUGUS*, FROM SASKATCHEWAN

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True albinism, where there is a complete lack of melanin pigmentation so the skin is clear, hair white, and eyes pink has been noted in bats, although only rarely.¹ To our knowledge there are only three records of albinism in Little Brown Bats (*Myotis lucifugus*), perhaps the most common bat in North America.³ Only one of these records is from Canada.^{2,4} The description of a bat caught in 1980 in Alberta notes that it was a "true" albino in that the pelage,

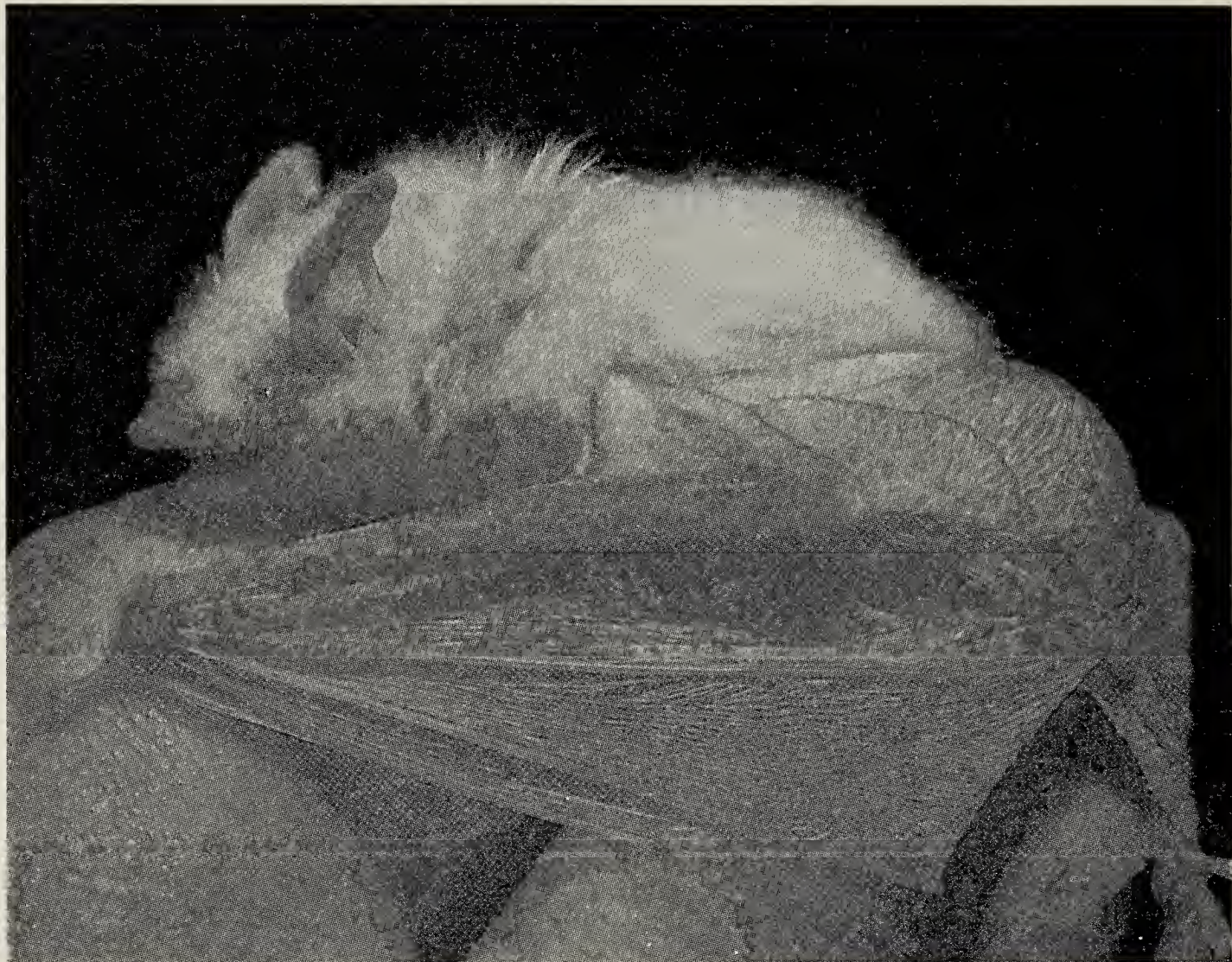
flight membranes and ears were all white without any indication of dark pigmentation.² However, due to the condition of the specimen, it was not possible to examine the eyes and determine if they were pink. The other two specimens were not "true" albinos, having significant amounts of pigmentation.⁴

Here we describe the first complete record of a "true" albino Little Brown Bat. The female bat was



Albino Myotis lucifugus.

R. Mark Brigham



Albino Myotis lucifugus.

R. Mark Brigham

caught at approximately 2130 h on 16 June 1993 in Moose Mountain Provincial Park, Saskatchewan. Specifically, the bat was caught in a mist net set approximately 100 m from, but parallel to, the shore of Kenosee Lake and about 50 m from the recreation hall building. Two other normally pigmented Little Brown Bats (one pregnant female and one adult male) were captured at the same time as the albino.

The bat was a "true" albino as there was no evidence of any pigmentation and the eyes were pink. Gentle palpation of the abdomen indicated that the bat was pregnant with one young, indicating that it had successfully hibernated over at least one winter and was reproductively capable. The canines showed virtu-

ally no evidence of wear, suggesting that the bat was relatively young. The bat had a forearm length of 39.3 mm. It was banded on the right forearm with a green plastic split ring (#443) and released.

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NORTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL AND RED BAT CAUGHT ON BARBED-WIRE

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R3H 0W9

A recent review of accidental entanglement of birds on barbed-wire fences lists 41 articles on the subject.¹ Included in the more than 40 species noted were eight kinds of owls, the Great Horned Owl being found by seven observers. As the authors point out, not all of the birds involved with collisions with fences are likely to be found, hence "the full impact of fence-related mortality would be difficult to assess."¹ Mammals are not expected to become caught on barbed-wire in the way that birds are, except, as noted in the literature for bats.^{2,3,9} We can add another case of bat mortality in this way: Peter Taylor found a mummified Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*) snagged by its tail membrane on the barbed-wire high atop the perimeter fence at the Atomic Energy of Canada plant at Pinawa, Manitoba, on 10 September 1992.

On 8 October 1992, while walking along the edge of a grazed woodlot about 6.4 km northeast of Haywood, Manitoba, I found the remains of a Northern Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*) hanging on a fence roughly 1.5 m from the nearest trees. It took me a moment to realize that it was not simply an old rag, for I had not expected this species to occur in these sparse woods. The squirrel was dangling from the top strand of wire, about 1 m above the ground, near a fence post. It was not easily

unhooked. The squirrel had caught itself on a barb through the skin in front of its right forearm. The dried carcass, a husk of skin and bones, clearly had been there for some time. The woods consist of Trembling Aspen and Bur Oak growing on sandy loam. The fence ran parallel and close to a gravel road, across which was a more mature stand of aspen, also grazed.

According to Soper, the subspecies of flying squirrel expected to occur in this region is *Glaucomys sabrinus canescens*, his "Pallid Flying Squirrel."⁶ The type of locality for this pale race is Portage la Prairie, only about 30 km northwest of the site where I found the dead squirrel. This race is "known to inhabit the full length of the wooded valleys of the Red River and the Assiniboine, west to at least Treesbank, and south through the Pembina Hills and other timbered tracts into North Dakota."⁶ The present record shows that flying squirrels can occur in small tree growth at a considerable distance from the more heavily wooded river valleys.

A recent highly informative book on both Northern and Southern Flying Squirrels refers to but one previous record of a Northern Flying Squirrel caught on a barbed-wire fence.⁷ I went to the original publication for details of this observation

which was made on 20 June 1944 in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.⁵ The squirrel, an adult nursing female, was not long dead and had been trapped by a barb through the membrane in front of the left hind foot. "On attempting to free itself the squirrel had spun around the wire several times thus wrapping the skin further around it and making escape more hopeless. The skin at that point was badly torn. The incisors were broken down, evidently from futile assaults upon the metal. The wire was about three and a half feet off the ground. ... I could not see any sizeable trees toward which the squirrel might have been aiming unless it was one of the numerous saplings. The squirrel must have been nearing the ground at the termination of its glide and struck the fence where it perished."⁵ Mammalogist T. Donald Carter found a Northern Flying Squirrel that had died in similar fashion north of Jasper National Park, Alberta, presumably in 1935: "A dead immature individual was found by Mr. Carter firmly snagged on a barbed-wire fence by its flight membrane."⁴

Another rare accident involving a Northern Flying Squirrel that survived came to light after an adult male was accidentally trapped on 3 January 1975 near Gypsumville, Manitoba. "The flying squirrel must have glided into a branch of a Balsam Poplar tree, whereupon the slender and sharply-pointed terminal bud penetrated the loose thin skin and lodged itself along the rib cage. ... The winter bud probably entered the body during the autumn, or possibly even during previous winter."¹⁰

Nancy Wells-Gosling's well-illustrated book on flying squirrels

points out that in North Carolina, at the southern border of this species' range, the Northern Flying Squirrel is listed as endangered.⁷ Not, we hope, by barbed-wire.

I would like to thank Peter Taylor and Jack DuBois for the information on the Red Bat. Robert E. Jones reviewed the manuscript and helped with references.

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ANOTHER RED SQUIRREL BIRD-KILL

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R3H 0W9

The capture of a House Sparrow by a Red Squirrel at a bird feeder in our Winnipeg yard in July 1987 was described in a previous note in the *Blue Jay*.¹ That particular squirrel, which generally was more aggressive towards birds than we appreciated, was eventually removed from our premises. That still left us with at least five Red Squirrels and several Gray Squirrels, the latter posing no problem. Belligerent passes at birds by Red Squirrels and the occasional appearance of feathers on the lawn near our feeders suggested possible squirrel-bird predation. Not until 1992, however, did we actually see this happen for the second time.

By late fall 1992, Gray Squirrels had stopped visiting our yard, and only two Red Squirrels were resident. On 14 October, at 1:05 p.m., we saw a Red Squirrel seize and carry off an adult White-throated Sparrow. The sparrow, which had been seen at the feeder for a few days previously, seemed a little slower than normal, but it was active and appeared able to fly capably. At the time of the observation, it was feeding inside a box-type feeder, one with a window at the closed end. When the squirrel suddenly dropped from an overhanging spruce bough onto the feeder shelf, the sparrow rushed to the rear of the box, to the window, where it was cornered by the squirrel. After a brief struggle, the squirrel carried the bird in its mouth up the spruce tree and, apparently, onto the roof of the house.

Three days later, at 1:00 p.m. on 17 October, a Red Squirrel, presumably the same one, came down the spruce tree with a bird in its mouth. I dashed outside to chase it, whereupon it ran up a nearby oak tree, still carrying the bird. I frightened it enough so that it dropped the bird and then fled to the back of our yard. To my surprise, the bird was a White-throated Sparrow, which I judged to be dead for a few days. I guessed that it was the same one that we had seen a squirrel kill three days earlier. Apparently, the squirrel had cached the sparrow somewhere, and was in the process of retrieving it to take to its den beneath a brush pile in our backyard, for that is the direction in which the squirrel headed.

This reinforces the suggestion made in my earlier note that these are opportunistic kills, perhaps motivated by aggressive defense of the food source, as much as by a carnivorous appetite. On 23 May 1986, Brian Sullivan, near Minnedosa, Manitoba, observed a Red Squirrel "attack and kill a male American Goldfinch from a flock of goldfinches on a feeder fastened to a tree two metres above the ground. The squirrel approached the tree from the ground, climbed to the feeder on the opposite side of the tree trunk, and rushed in on the flock. The squirrel carried the goldfinch to the ground and did not return within 10 minutes."² Sullivan suggests that the "squirrel killed the goldfinch in defense of a food source, rather than for consumption."²

Our feeders are certainly not under constant scrutiny. Who knows how many birds we may have lost? This may even be part of the reason for the complete absence of House Sparrows at our feeders the same winter, something we had not seen previously. Given the propensity of Red Squirrels for attacking birds,

perhaps it is a mistake to place feeders on or near trees.

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Red Squirrel

Larry Morgotch

UNEXPLAINED DEATH OF A BLACK BEAR

RANDOLPH J. SEGUIN, Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management, Box 580, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. S0M 1V0

In 1973, Poelker and Hartwell stated, "Information on natural mortality of black bear is limited."⁴ This is as true today as it was at that time. In 1993, as part of a Black Bear study in the southern boreal forest of west-central Saskatchewan, north of Meadow Lake, winter den searches were conducted. During one search the rare event of encountering the carcass of a Black Bear, apparently dead of "natural" causes, occurred.

Case History On 1 June 1992, a black adult female bear was trapped some 30 miles north of Meadow Lake. She measured 59 in. in length and 30 in. in girth. The width of the forepaw was 3.5 in. She weighed 130 pounds. Later analysis of the cementum annuli of an extracted tooth indicated that she was 5.25 years old.⁶ She was lactating and a single cub-of-the-year was in attendance.

She was tranquillized, collared with a radio transmitter, allowed to recover and left the trap site with the cub at heel. Through the summer, activity patterns were monitored and her geographic location was determined nine times based on satellite telemetry. She went to den between 15 and 18 October 1992.

Aerial surveys to establish preliminary den locations were conducted 3 to 5 March 1993, inclusive. Locations were recorded through the use of a Global Positioning System. Ground site inspections were conducted on

25 and 26 March 1993.

During the ground site inspection on 25 March 1993, she was located approximately 500-600 yards from her estimated den location. She was dead, but without a readily apparent cause (i.e., no visible wounds). The inspection team returned to the site on 1 April to retrieve the carcass.

Cause of Death Investigations The carcass was submitted to Drs. G. Wobeser, H. Philibert, and Ted Leighton of the Department of Veterinary Medicine, Western College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon (Path#: N93-1687).

At a gross level of examination the animal was deemed to be in good condition and weighed about 108 pounds at the time of death (about 3 to 4 pounds lighter than the actual weight of the carcass due to loss of bodily fluids and some scavenging which had taken place). A mass of "tightly packed and interwoven hair and grass fibres" was located in the intestine. No other unusual findings were noted (G. Wobeser, pers. comm.).

The histopathology conducted on the urinary bladder, intestines, skin, brain, kidney, spleen, stomach, lymph nodes, pancreas, lung, heart, adrenal gland and liver revealed no significant abnormalities. Likewise, efforts at bacteriological cultures



*Female Black Bear found dead of "natural" causes,
Meadow Lake Provincial Park.*

Randy Seguin

from the lung, kidney, liver, spleen and meninge were inconclusive. The pathologic diagnosis referenced "no significant findings". Comments accompanying the pathologist report stated, "The cause of death was not determined." Dr. Wobeser indicated that whatever the cause of death might have been, it was not related to the effects of being tranquilized or radio collared (pers. comm.).

Discussion Two items in the pathology report should be further examined. First, the animal being in "good condition" refers primarily to the amount of body fat present on the carcass. In the previous year, after several months of spring feeding, she weighed only about 20 pounds more than at the time of death. This is readily explainable based on her having just come through the winter denning period (weight losses of 20-30 percent being common) and hav-

ing had no opportunity to feed during the spring prior to her death.

Second, the occurrence of the "tightly woven mass" in the intestine is not surprising. I suspect it was what is commonly referred to as a fecal plug. These masses apparently occur in all hibernating Black Bears and are dispelled in the spring soon after den exit. These fecal plugs are often found near den sites.

Summary The rarity of finding a Black Bear dead at the den site is illustrated by a paucity of reports in the literature. Two reports by each of Cardoza and Jonkel refer to a singular citation of Wright in 1910 who claimed to have found bears dead in their dens.^{1,3} Jonkel then immediately states, "Despite these claims, mortality during the denning period must be low."³ In reviewing 22 articles from various sources that



Dead female Black Bear.

Randy Seguin

involved work at den sites, I encountered no death notations.

Information with respect to disease in Black Bears is primarily based on examination of hunter-killed animals or blood serum investigations. A 1991, State of California report sums up the disease situation in Black Bears as follows: "while bear may be exposed to disease, it is a minor factor in overall bear mortality."⁵ Garfield in his review paper stated "hibernating hosts display increased resistance to microbial infection."² Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that no disease was identified as the cause of death of this denning bear,

but it does beg the question, "What was the cause of death?"

Acknowledgements This work was carried out as part of a Black Bear study sanctioned under the Partnership Agreement in Forestry program. I would like to thank Ed Beveridge and Ian McMurchy, Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management, for their diligence in locating den sites. Added thanks go to Ed and Harvey Penner for their extraordinary efforts in retrieving the carcass. I would also like to thank the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre for funding the necropsy and pathology investigations.

1. CARDOZA, J.E. 1976. The history and status of the Black Bear in Massachusetts and adjacent New England States. Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Westborough, Massachusetts. Research Bulletin 18. 113 pp.
2. GARFIELD, E. 1988. Nothing to snooze at: exploring the mysteries of hibernation. *Current Contents* 20:3-9.
3. JONKEL, C.J. 1967. Black Bear population studies. Big Game Research, Bozeman, Montana. State of Montana Job Completion Report. No. W-98-R-1. 148 pp.
4. POELKER, R.J. and H.D. HARTWELL. 1973. Black Bear of Washington. Washington State Game Department, Olympia, Washington. Biological Bulletin No. 14. 180 pp.
5. RESOURCES AGENCY, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME. 1991. Draft environmental document regarding: bear hunting. Sacramento, California. 233 pp. + appendices.
6. WILLEY, C.H. 1974. Aging Black Bears from first premolar tooth sections. *J. Wildl. Manage.* 38:97-100.



NATURE LIBRARY

A PRAIRIE ALPHABET

YVETTE MOORE and JO BANNATYNE-CUGNET. 1992. Tundra Books, Montreal. 31 pp. \$19.95.

This is a delightful book for teaching children five years of age or older something about the Prairies of Canada. Settings for Yvette Moore's paintings in our western provinces can give children and adults alike an impression of the rural scene. Unfortunately, this scene is often blurred for many people by the flood of urban impressions that crowd our real lives and television screens.

The single sentence captions for each letter of the alphabet are reasonably accurate, grammatically correct and at the same time poetic; e.g., "Gophers gaze at geese flying over the grassland," and, "The quarter horses stand quietly by the quonset." The alliteration in the "alphabet" sentences and the page of other words with each letter will be useful to children learning proper use of our language. Also, the paragraph relating to each "letter page" provides useful information about what does happen on farms in our Canadian Prairies. There are some normal precautions and safety tips for young and old alike not familiar with farm scenes and hazards.

Sky dominance and small size of human figures is appropriate in the paintings. Location and identity of the animals in the loft (letter B) leaves a question in my mind but is excusable. Similarly, a few statements in the text are open to question, for instance, under "Y". Yardlights do not always indicate an occupied farm. Travellers may be deceived about

the distance to such a light, and this is a risk on winter nights in unfamiliar territory.

All in all, *A Prairie Alphabet* is a wonderful contribution to our culture. Buy it for your grandchildren and enjoy it yourselves.

Reviewed by J.R. Jowsey, Box 400, Saltcoats, Saskatchewan. S0A 3R0

SAVING AMERICAN BIRDS: T. GILBERT PEARSON AND THE FOUNDING OF THE AUDUBON MOVEMENT

OLIVER H. ORR, JR. 1992. Univ. Florida Press, Gainesville, 296 pp., illus. Cloth. \$34.95 US.

Orr has pulled together materials from every source to document the life of T. Gilbert Pearson, a crusader in the cause of conservation.

T. Gilbert Pearson was born in Tuscola, Illinois, in 1873, and moved to Archer, Florida, in 1882. As a child in Florida, Pearson was an avid "egger" which was a common activity of most ornithologists during that period, a practice of considerable scientific value. At the age of 17 Gilbert began to read and contribute to the *Ornithologist and Oologist*, a popular journal for advanced bird students of the time. Pearson was also an avid supporter and member of the YMCA, and became highly involved in its bi-weekly meetings and lectures.

After joining the American Ornithologists's Union in 1891, Pearson was largely responsible for organizing a society devoted to the protection of birds that were at the time vulnerable to commercial

exploitation and unregulated hunting. In 1902, Pearson founded the North Carolina Audubon Society, which was the first such organization in the southern states. In considering which birds should be classed as pests, Pearson included the Bobolink with the House Sparrow in his list of not protected birds. He also added hawks, owls, and other species such as blackbirds, crows, and grackles to the unprotected species list. By 1911, Pearson had become the first major leader of the National Audubon Society and he was highly instrumental in the society becoming the strong international force in conservation it is today.

This superb volume gives an excellent account of Pearson's crusade for conservation. Pearson and other conservationists altered public attitudes toward birds, and lobbied laws through state and federal legislatures for bird protection. "Teddie" Roosevelt was highly supportive of the Audubon movement, and prior to retiring from office in 1909, he was instrumental in establishing 51 bird reservations, and 5 national parks for

future preservation of wildlife and our national heritage.

In South Carolina an Audubon warden was murdered in 1908, and in 1910 a chief game warden position was established. In 1911, Pearson employed National Game Association wardens on the South Carolina coast, and all bird colonies began to stabilize. Other states, such as Oregon and California, followed. In the same year Pearson resigned as North Carolina Audubon Society secretary, although, until his death in 1943, he was an active advocate for the National Association of Audubon Societies.

This book traces the career of T. Gilbert Pearson as a conservationist. It will be of interest to the lay person, the scientific community, and especially those active in Audubon Societies throughout the nation.

Reviewed by *Harlan D. Walley*, Department of Biology, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois, U.S.A. 60115



During the dust bowl years of the 1930s, a total of about 18 million acres was turned into desert by the winds. Huge clouds of plains dust billowed over New York City and darkened the skies over the city of Washington; throughout the plains themselves, street lights had to be turned on at noon. *Peter Farb, 1963. Face of North America; Natural History of a Continent. Harper & Row.*

POETRY

WINTER'S ONSET

The world's become an unremitting
gray:
The winter sky opaque without a hint
Of colour — and its upward bending
arch,
In paradox, a low and seeming flat
Impasto, out of which a few small
flakes
Descend in grayish whirls. Above,
the snow
Is dark against the zenith, but before
The leaden rim of sky, the falling
flakes
Look light. With parallel and slant-
wise strokes
They cut right through the circling
edge of earth
And blend the sky to land. The
snowy fields

Extend their textured slopes of gray
on gray
(Eroded by continual ground drift)
To blurred horizons. Were there not
some light
That's filtered through the overcast
and caught
By sculptured surfaces, the distant
fields
Would show no meeting line with
somber sky.
And bushes, leafless, streaked with
falling snow,
Would seem to float in space, small
islands of
A darker gray, now rooted in the air
And motionless in winter's mono-
chrome.

VICTOR C. FRIESEN, Box 65, Rosthern,
Saskatchewan. S0K 3R0



"Motionless in winter's monochrome"

Victor C. Friesen

WHISTLING WINGS

Small bluish-gray head
(Tiny black dot
Almost obscure
Beauty spot
Below each ear)
Bobs as the cooing bird
Walks slowly
And talks gently
To itself or its mate,
trim body camouflaged well
In soft shades of fawn and gray,
Searches among the weeds
Along the dusty roadway
For fine bits of gravel
To grind wheat grains and sunflower
seeds.

Arrowlike tail tapers
From long central feathers
Bordered with startling white
Distinct
From any other
Family member
Except the extinct
Larger Passenger Pigeon
(Gunned to zero from legion)
Slate-blue pointed wings
Squeak, creak, whistle
Like a rusty gate
For lubricating oil
As the Mourning Dove springs
Into swift direct flight.

JEAN MACKENZIE, 1014 - 7th Street
East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7H 0Y8

FLICKER'S FEATHERS

I have a fondness for flickers
the way they come down from the
trees
to crouch and stab the lawn
gravely poking holes in the sod
probing the earth for ants.

They look so vulnerable there
in their serious searching
black bib lowered to the ground
deepening their shadowed front
blazing head lifting to scan.

Rump feathers shining white
wings trembling with excitement
face down, pausing, drawing up
reluctant frenzied ants on tongue
our flicker hurriedly feasts.

The ants in our lawn must tremble
at this chaotic forced intrusion
whose small heaps of fine soil
lead our flicker to return again
back to where he's been.

Sometimes they sprawl in the sun
head tilted back to face the sky
bill open to receive the heat
resting upon spread wings
a temporary lull in a busy life.

When I find a golden shaft
atilt on the green grass
shed in summer's passing fast
I take it as a gift to cherish
a flicker's fully paid toll.

ROBERT W. NERO, Box 14, 1495 St.
James Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba. R3H
0W9



LETTERS

OBSERVATION OF SQUIRREL CARRYING YOUNG

With regard to a letter from E. Otto Hohn in the June ['93] issue of *Blue Jay* on "How do squirrels carry their young?":

Several years ago we had a Red Squirrel that had made a nest under our back steps. One evening my husband and I saw her carry two of her young in the same manner as the European squirrel. This is the one and only time I have seen this and found it quite interesting to watch.

- B. Jones, 348 Parkway Boulevard, Flin Flon, Manitoba. R8A 0K1

HAWKS NEAR AVONLEA

I enjoyed reading about the "Hawk attack" by Jeremy Baumberck in December 1992 *Blue Jay*.

When walking on a field in July 1992, my daughter Gilbertha had a similar experience with a Marsh Hawk. She was not wearing a cap, so she pulled her jacket over her head. She too sped up her walk, to get away from that field.

Later a nest site with five young Marsh Hawks was discovered in the area.

I had a different experience with a hawk on 4 September 1992 — a cool, overcast, drizzly day. In the evening Nick, my husband, went to close in the chickens, but came back in a hurry to tell me that there was something he thought I would like to see. I am glad he did. On the chickens' fence was an immature goshawk with a big, white chicken.

I watched the hawk pluck feathers and eat bits of meat. It did not seem to mind me when I walked slowly toward it. As I was about to pet its head, it flew to a nearby post. Not wanting to disturb it anymore, we closed the door to the henhouse and left, watching to see if the hawk would come back to the chicken. It did and then had a late supper.

The following morning the hawk was back at the chicken. Later perched in a tree visible from the window. The chickens were kept closed in until the hawk left our yard, which was three days later. Part of the chicken was left uneaten — a big chicken proved to be too much for one hawk.

No hard feelings about the chicken — it was a small price to pay for all the enjoyment hawks provide us by soaring and gliding over fields. And, we do not need to buy tickets to enjoy them.

- Flossie Bogdan, Box 207, Avonlea, Saskatchewan. S0H 0C0

THE HUMMINGBIRD EPIC CONTINUES

We received a female, Ruby-throated Hummingbird from Rhonda O'Grady in January 1993 (see September 1993 *Blue Jay*). She arrived in a white laundry hamper along with a box of components for her feed and instructions. Initially, we were planning to install her in an outside greenhouse, but heating problems arose, and she lived free in our home for several months. She perched in the top branches of a hibiscus plant on a stand near the largest window in our house. She would



"Buzz" in her hibiscus plant.

Terry Langelier

routinely fly around our living room at a distance of two inches from the ceiling, often orbiting the unused ceiling fan.

We fed the hummingbird a diet with several components plus as many fruit flies as she wanted. The plants on the stand — hibiscus, lipstick plant, and begonias — bloomed all winter. She inspected them regularly. Sometimes she would sit in a fig tree in our stained glass studio to be in the winter sun.

Come spring, we put another feeder outside the house within eye-shot of her customary perch. Eventually a male appeared, and Randy witnessed the two birds bobbing and hovering, one on each side of the window, probably courting. The time to release her came on the next warm, sunny, not-too-windy weekend at the end of May. We opened the basket and she hovered for a

second before she darted high into the branches of a dead poplar tree across the yard. Feeders were stationed about the yard, but with fruit trees and wildflowers in bloom, we doubted she would hang around. However, on occasion we see a female hummingbird at the windows where the plant stand is in the house, even though the feeder has been moved to a different part of the yard.

- Terry and Randy Langelier, Box 306, Blumenort, Manitoba. R0A 0C0

HUMMINGBIRD MEMORY

Hummingbirds never cease to amaze me with their gymnastics, their iridescent colours glinting in the sun, and their aerial warfare, among other things. Being very territorial, at times one will try to claim the feeder, sitting on a nearby perch and attacking any birds that come near.

At times, a collision will occur, but that is rare — they are all bluff, no fight.

And not the least amazing is what appears to be their ability to remember. Like the time we thought we had our very own hummingbirds. Well, sort of. One spring we were a bit late in putting out the feeder, which hung under the eaves, just in front of a large window. A hummingbird was seen circling the exact place where the feeder should have been. And I do not mean in the general vicinity of the window, but within a foot or so of the wire that was still hanging from the eaves.

Thinking that this was an isolated happening, we were astounded when the following spring it happened again. Could it be that the

hummingbird remembered? Being convinced that was so, we were not hesitant in telling others about it. But our self-importance was soon deflated; we found that other folk had observed the same behaviour. Apparently hummingbirds, when they arrive, at least in our area, check out large windows under the eaves where feeders are usually to be found. But it is hard to believe that they remember, having been away for almost six months, travelled a few thousand miles and visited many places. Whether or not they actually remember, I do not know. But I find it amazing that they try to locate something that, quite possibly, they fed out of six months previously.

- *Donald Dobie*, 3036 Mallard Street, RR#3, Victoria, British Columbia. V8X 3X1



Winter.

Bernie Gollop

NORTHERN WHEATEAR SIGHTED IN REGINA

Recently Mr. Frank H. Brazier wrote to me suggesting that I submit an account of a sighting of a Northern Wheatear. The event was originally reported in the Spring 1993 issue of *American birds*.

I saw the wheatear immediately outside our house's large kitchen window facing northward, at 2368 Rae Street in Regina. The date was Sunday, 6 September 1992. The time was mid-morning and the conditions were clear and bright.

Our breakfast table faces the window which gives an unimpeded view of the back garden, enclosed on all sides. It is a garden which migrating, small birds enjoy. We watch particularly closely during the migratory season. Further, we keep a good pair of binoculars and two field guides close at hand.

My wife and I saw an unusual bird. I am an experienced but by no means expert bird watcher. In the past I participated in bird counts on boxing day and in the spring. I have enjoyed the challenge since I was a child, and while I lived on several different continents. My wife has also developed an interest in birds. Between us we sought carefully an accurate description of what we were seeing. Since we had never seen this bird before I had to leaf through Bull and Farrand's 1977 *Audubon field guide to eastern birds*, comparing all sparrow-like possibilities. At page 284, plate 510, we found the

correct photo. I believe the bird we saw must have been either immature or in autumn plumage since the colours were not quite as pronounced as those in the guide, but the inverted "T" on the tail feathers was unmistakable.

What was most commanding, however, was the bird's behaviour. As we watched, the bird jumped repeatedly from the ground to the top of a tomato cage and back, almost frenetically. This display occurred no more than 4.5 m from us. The unusual behaviour is described in Peterson's *Field guide to western birds*, pages 184-85 and a line drawing of the immature bird is on page 250.

Presently the wheatear flew away but returned shortly for a confirmation view. Very considerate we thought. Had I been professional or even thought of the rarity of what we were observing I would have tried to photograph the bird, but then I might have risked missing him and failing to identify him (at least to our satisfaction). My wife and I continued to question our impressions until we became confident enough to report what we saw.

Although the event occurred a year ago, I refreshed my memory with the account I wrote at the time with the archival assistance of Robert Kreba of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. It was he who reported originally to *American birds*.

- Jos. K. Roberts, 2368 Rae Street,
Regina, Saskatchewan. S4T 2G2



UPDATE ON THE VIOLET GREEN SWALLOW AT SASKATOON

I reported my observations of Violet Green Swallows at Saskatoon in Issue 2, Vol. 50 of *Blue Jay* (p. 109). Subsequently I was advised by Stuart Houston that a number of Violet Green Swallows had been observed during the summer banding program of Prairie Falcons along the Saskatchewan River valley. This was during the summer of 1992 in mid-June.

The banding program was carried out west and south of Eston in the vicinity of Glidden and Snipe Lake.

During the course of these observations Stuart reported that four nests of Violet Green Swallows were observed. Because of the banders' concern that they not disturb the falcons no check was later made to determine the conditions of the swallows' nests and the status of the eggs and young. Also, Stuart reports that no Violet Green Swallows were observed in 1993 which makes one wonder if the sightings made at or near Saskatoon were an aberration as opposed to a range extension.

- *D.H. Wright*, Law Courts, 520 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7K 3G7



Woodchuck.

G.J. Smith

SOCIETY NEWS

NATURE SASKATCHEWAN 1993 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1993 annual general meeting was held in Saskatoon, 2-3 October. The Saskatoon Natural History Society organized the event, which included tours to Silverspring Prairie and Wanuskewin. Many participants called it the best annual general meeting the organization has ever had.

Following is a list of award winners:

Melanie Elliott of Saskatoon took home the Larry Morgotch Award, which is presented to the member who best tells a nature story through slides.

Bernard de Vries of Regina was presented the prestigious Conservation Award for his lifetime commit-

ment to nature study and conservation.

Pat Adams, Mary Gilliland, Frank Roy, Jim Wedgwood, and Stan Shadick were named as Nature Saskatchewan Fellows.

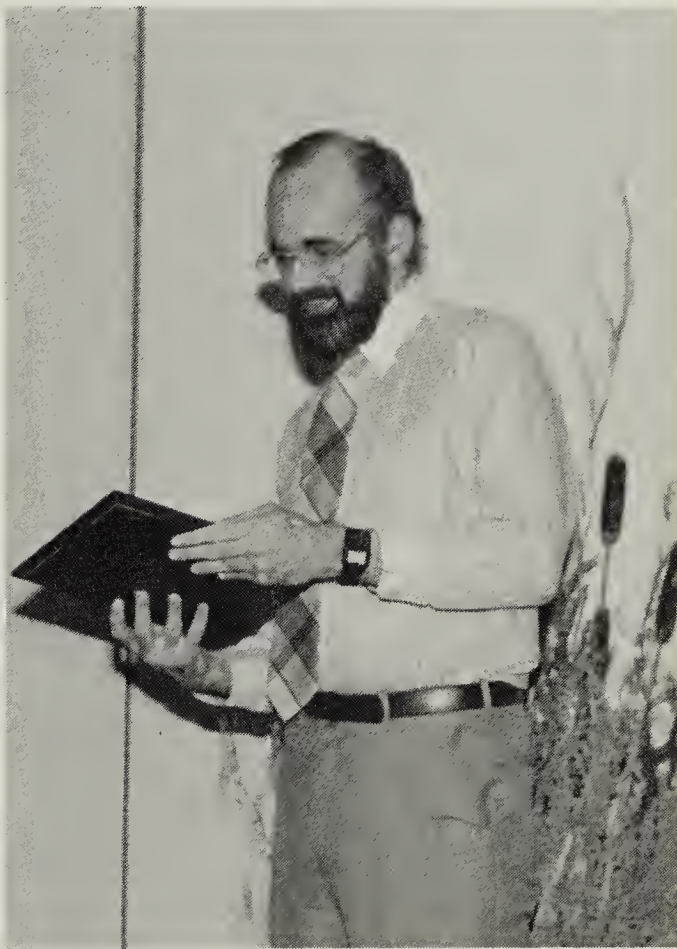
Judith Richardson of Steinbach, Manitoba, won the Cliff Shaw Award for best article in *Blue Jay* (photo unavailable). Judith's delightful, winning article was Unusual Ruby-throated Hummingbird encounters and a late fall record (51:143-146).

The **Saskatoon Natural History Society** won the Weyburn Bird-a-thon.

Both **Mary** and **Stewart Houston** received Canada 125 medals for lifetime volunteer work.



Melanie Elliott receives Larry Morgotch Award from Frank Roy. Pat Adams

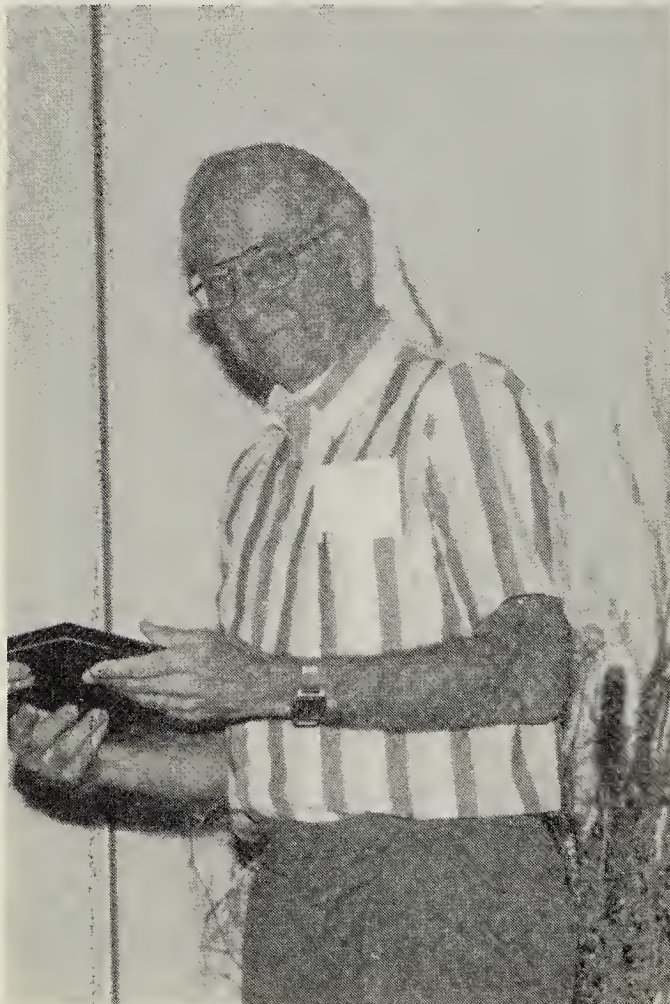


Stan Shadick – new Nature Saskatchewan Fellow. Pat Adams



Paul James, First Vice-President (left), presents Conservation Award to Bernard De Vries.

Pat Adams



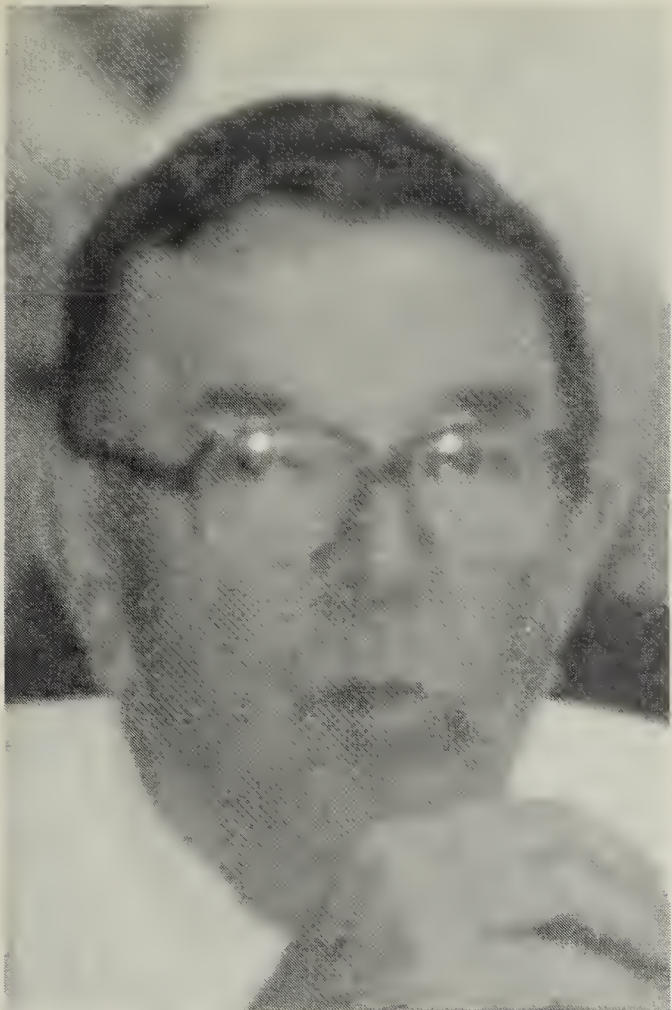
Frank Roy becomes Nature Saskatchewan Fellow.

Pat Adams



Pat Adams – new Nature Saskatchewan Fellow.

J. Asai



*Jim Wedgwood – new Nature
Saskatchewan Fellow.*

Pat Adams



Mary Gilliland – another Fellow.

Pat Adams



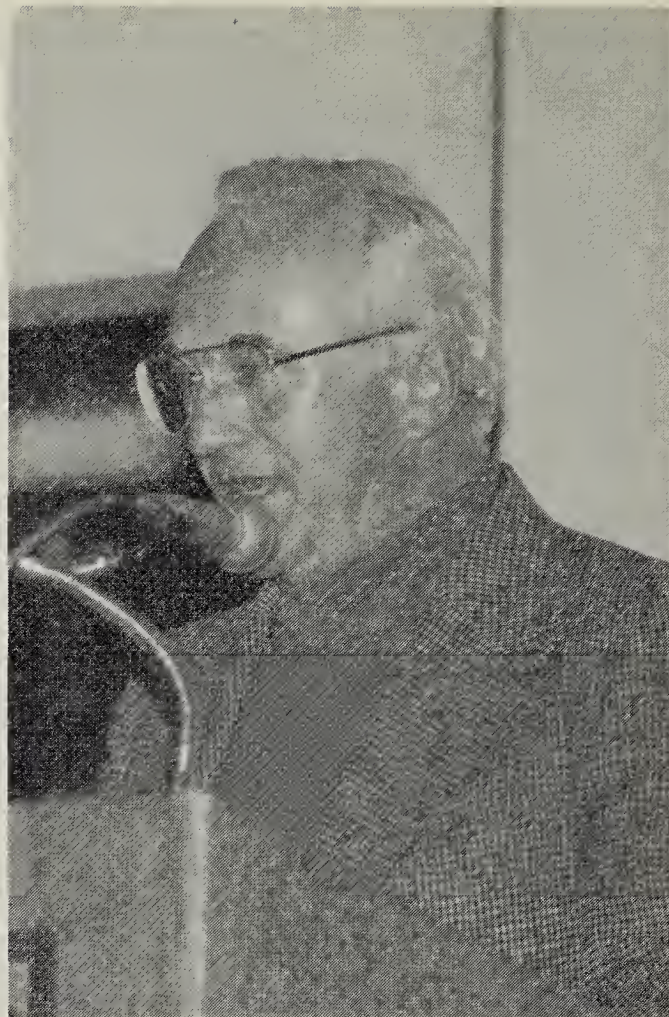
*Mary and Stuart Houston receive Canada 125 medals from Mary Gilliland,
Canadian Nature Federation Past-President.*

Pat Adams



Michael Williams accepts Weyburn Bird-a-thon award on behalf of Saskatoon Natural History Society.

Pat Adams



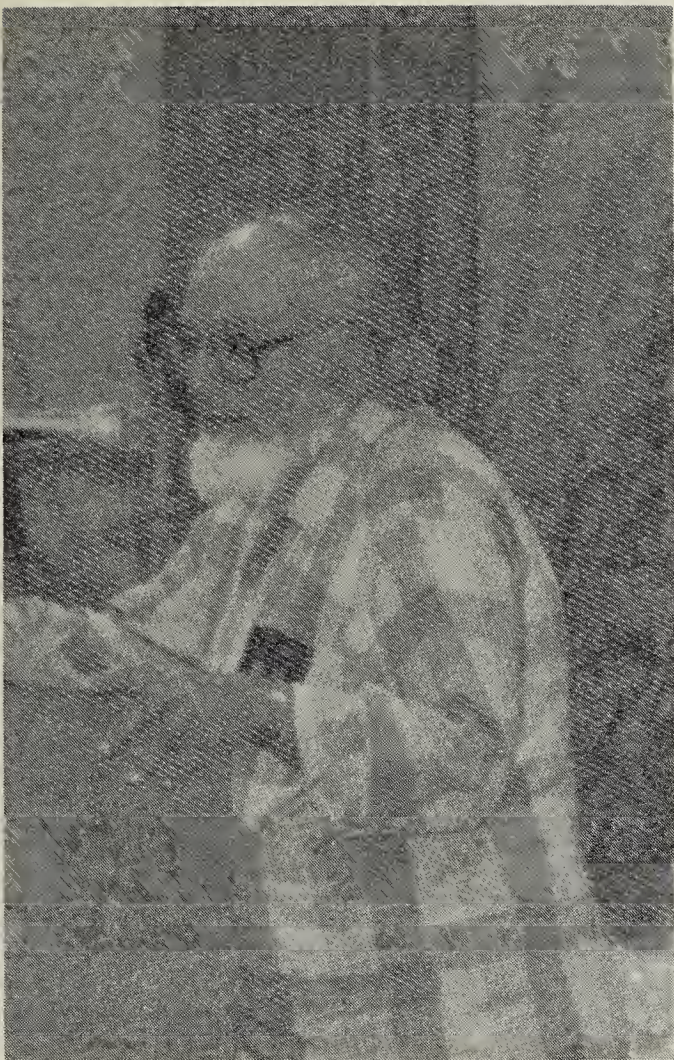
Past President Frank Switzer.

Pat Adams

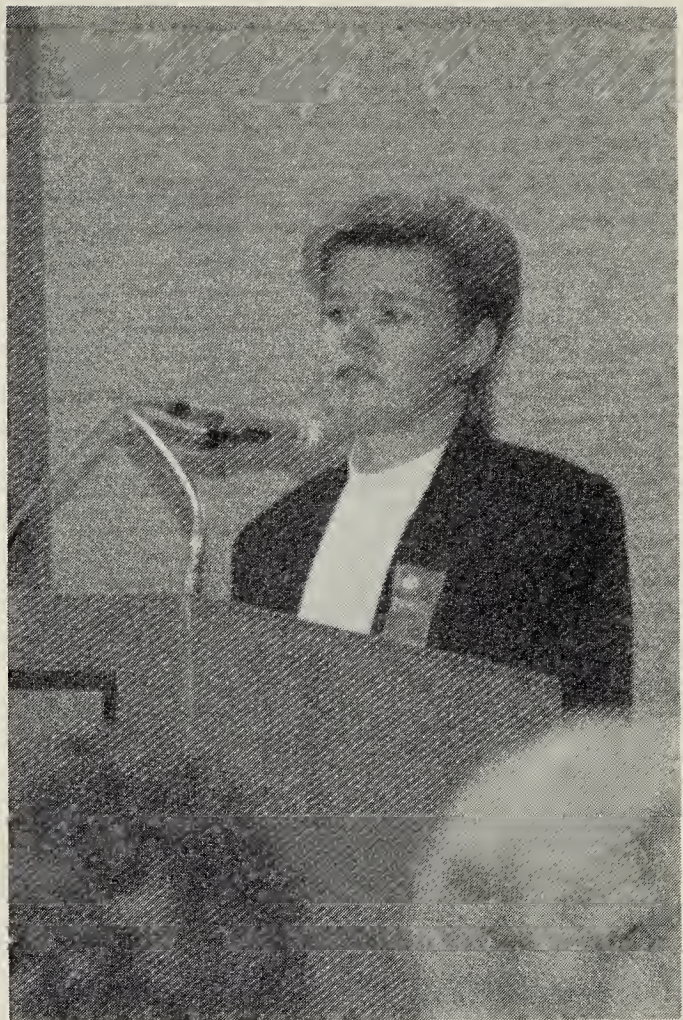


Some new Board members (left to right): Curt Schroeder (executive director), Frank Switzer, Kathleen Donauer, Bob Berthiaume, Stan Shadick, Christine Pike, Ed Walker, Doug Schmeiser, Andy Didiuk, Alan Appleby.

Pat Adams



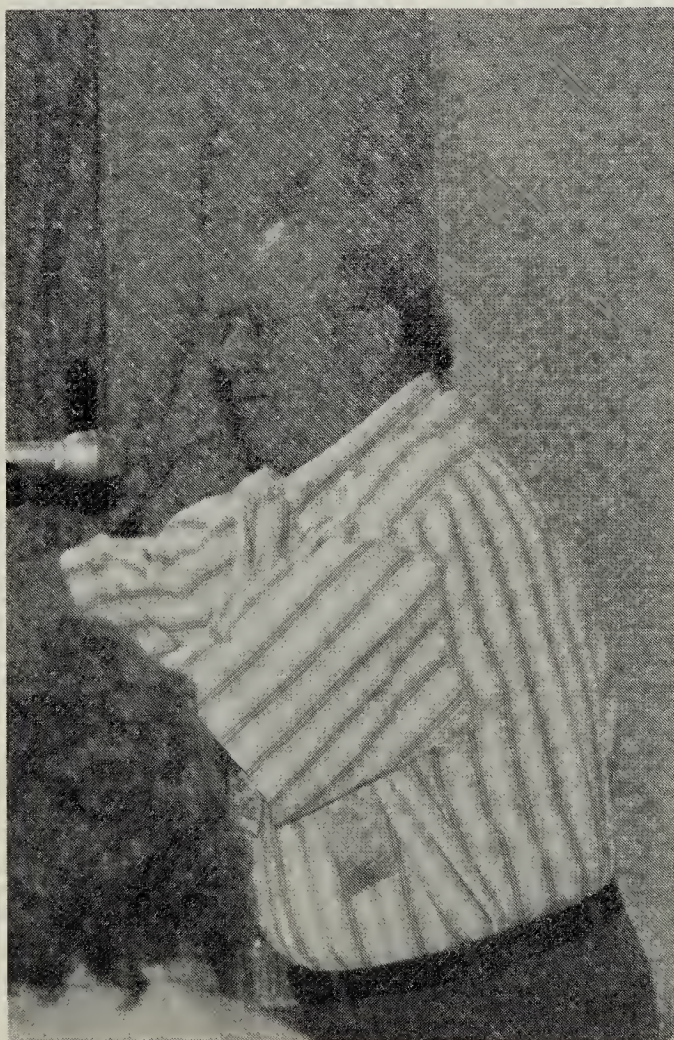
Bernie Gollop.



Myrna Pearman, guest speaker.

Pat Adams

Pat Adams



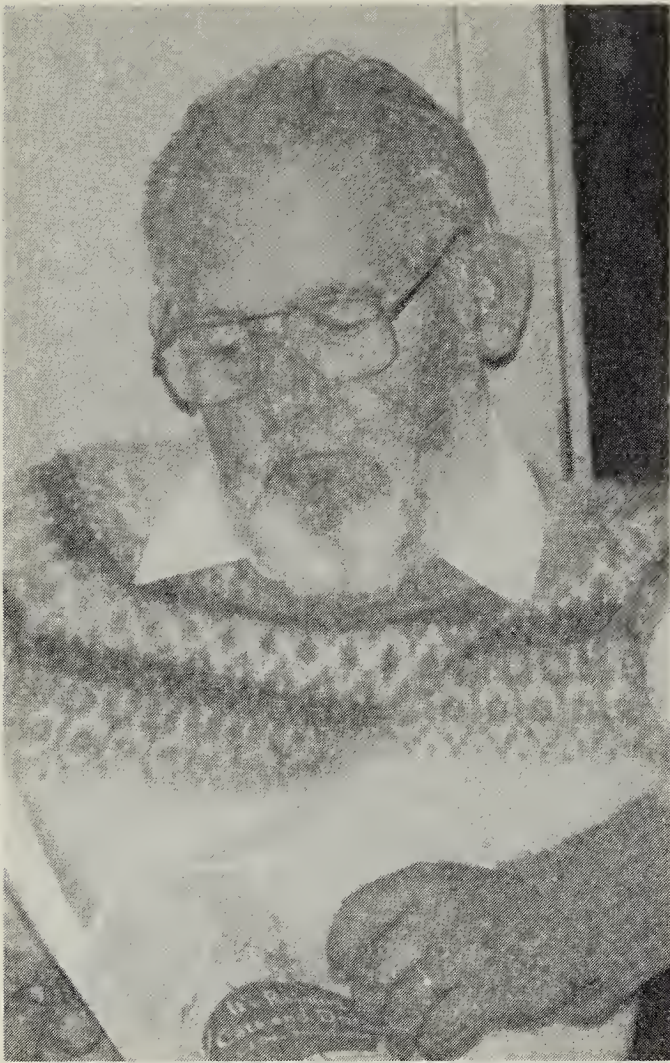
Dieter Martin.

Pat Adams



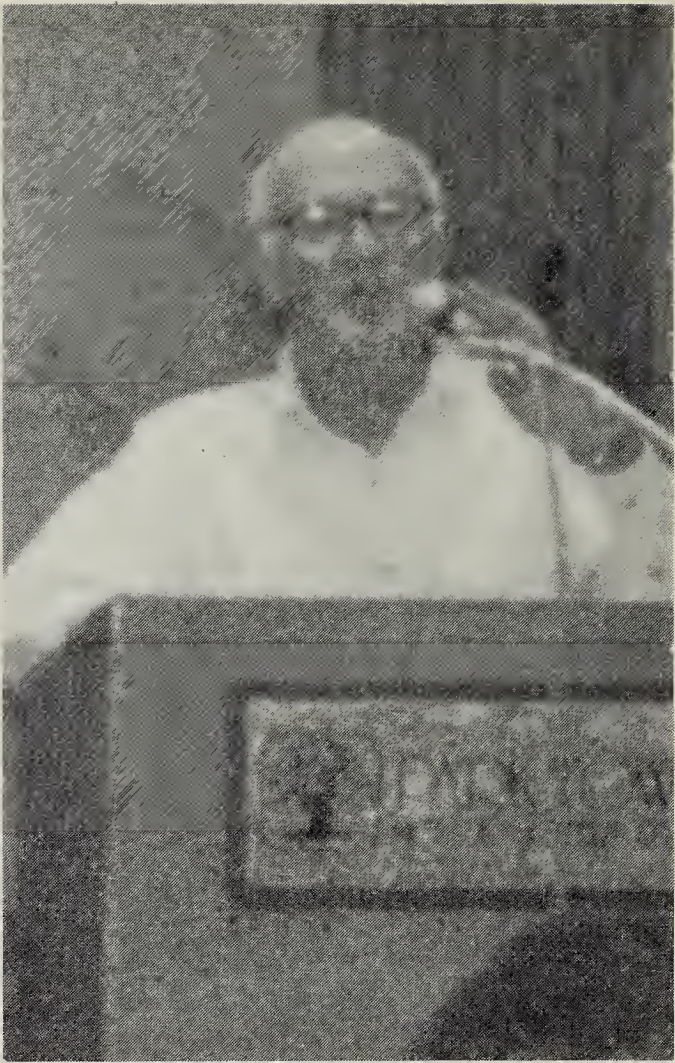
Carol Blenkin.

Pat Adams



A quiet moment.

Pat Adams



Jim Slimmon.

Pat Adams



Pat Adams

**SASKATCHEWAN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL
ACTIVITIES AND FUND BALANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 1993***

	1993	1992
REVENUE		
Grants - Sask. Trust for Sport, Culture and Recreation: Annual Global Funding	101,100	96,000
Grants - Specified Programs	9,000	119,314
Grants - Other	16,325	11,591
Specified Programs	30,512	24,412
Trusts	9,405	3,537
Self Generated		
AGM Revenue	523	1,659
Advertising	595	227
Bookshop Net Income	2,818	1,739
Donations	295	1,152
GST Rebate	3,580	3,746
Interest	6,055	8,244
Memberships	22,555	21,290
Sale of Assets	—	400
Special Publications	2,321	1,373
Spring Meet	75	1,617
Souvenir Sales	1,307	742
Tour Income	<u>2,186</u>	<u>5,391</u>
	<u>208,652</u>	<u>302,434</u>
EXPENSES		
Administration	90,762	68,145
Membership Communication		
Blue Jay Journal	24,575	24,143
Blue Jay News	7,538	8,826
Travel and Meetings		
Staff and Volunteer Travel	5,530	2,310
Annual and Summer Meetings	679	4,567
Board and Executive	2,131	1,221
Programs - Schedule 3	<u>91,904</u>	<u>195,539</u>
	<u>223,119</u>	<u>304,751</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN FUND BALANCE	(14,467)	(2,317)
INCREASE IN BOOKSHOP FUND BALANCE	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
TOTAL INCREASE (DECREASE) IN FUND BALANCE	(14,467)	(2,317)
FUND BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>44,006</u>	<u>46,323</u>
FUND BALANCE, END OF YEAR	<u>\$29,539</u>	<u>44,006</u>

**SASKATCHEWAN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 1993**

ASSETS	1993	1992
CURRENT		
Cash	\$20,478	46,921
Short-term Investments	126,215	83,016
Accounts Receivable	18,154	45,565
Inventory	12,658	12,818
Prepaid Expenses	<u>1,024</u>	<u>—</u>
	178,529	188,320
CAPITAL (Note 2)	40,245	20,799
OTHER		
Trust Account Investments (Note 3)	<u>295,692</u>	<u>282,049</u>
	<u>\$514,466</u>	<u>491,168</u>
LIABILITIES AND MEMBERS EQUITY		
CURRENT		
Accounts Payable	\$5,599	17,057
Deferred Revenue (Note 5)	<u>69,323</u>	<u>39,350</u>
	<u>74,922</u>	<u>56,407</u>
OTHER		
Specified Programs (Schedule 1)	74,068	87,907
Trust Accounts	<u>295,692</u>	<u>282,049</u>
	<u>369,760</u>	<u>369,956</u>
MEMBERS EQUITY		
Fund Balance	29,539	44,006
Equity in Fixed Assets	<u>40,245</u>	<u>20,799</u>
	<u>69,784</u>	<u>64,805</u>
	<u>\$514,466</u>	<u>491,168</u>

*Detailed financial statements are available from the Nature Saskatchewan office in Regina.



IN MEMORIAM

THE NATURAL HISTORY CONTRIBUTIONS OF H.C. GROSE

C. STUART HOUSTON, 863 University Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.
S7N 0J8

Harry Grose's writings, field notes and bird's egg collection offer useful information about Saskatchewan breeding birds prior to the 1930s, beginning after his three-year stint as a homesteader.

From July 1907 through December 1908 he taught at Briarmound School #1273, three miles southeast of Foam Lake, then succumbed to the lure of free land. Homestead files in the Saskatchewan Archives show that Grose, "aged 21 years, single, farmer" filed homestead file 155245 on 9 September 1908 for the south-east quarter of section 27, township 29, range 11, west of the 2nd meridian, 7 miles south and 3 miles east of the village of Foam Lake. He built a granary, a stable and a house in September 1908 and resided there until 31 December that year and again from March to October 1909, from February to December 1910 and April to June 1911. To defray his farm expenses (what's new?) he taught at Adamson School in Foam Lake in January and February of 1911. His land was completely fenced and cross-fenced. He broke 25 acres in 1909 and another 5 acres in 1910, with 25 and 30 acres cropped in 1910 and 1911. In 1909, he donated 1½ acres for the school grounds of Wonderville School district #1015, next to the rural post office named Malby.

His natural history observations were made as a teacher, between his farming and pharmacy careers. He published "Report on Birds — Observations by H.C. Grose" in the Report of the Chief Game Guardian for the year ending 30 April 1917. In his introduction Grose remarked, "I have also found everywhere I go a lack of interest shown by all in bird knowledge. This is the fault of early training of the young. The teachers in the public schools are not teaching their scholars Nature observation. The reason is that they themselves have little or no knowledge of birds." He then provided a list of his bird observations, in the order of the arrival of the birds at Lanigan in 1915 and at Lang in 1916.

Grose's publication listed 91 species in tabular form, with seven columns of information including spring arrival dates, date when first common, and nesting information for 33 species, including a nest at Yorkton of a species spreading west with settlement, the Mourning Dove. Tree Swallows and Purple Martins then nested in holes in aspen trees. He listed only five species as year-round residents, the Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Prairie Chicken, Snowy Owl, Short-eared Owl and Black-capped Chickadee. Working with limited resources in the days before field guides were available, Grose

correctly identified most of the birds he encountered. His list of 86 migrant species incorrectly included the Purple Grackle, Wood Thrush and Field Sparrow. In 1915 and 1916 he saw redpolls on 1 and 2 March; the first Horned Larks on 13 March in both years; American Crows on 20 and 27 March; Slate-colored Juncos on 20 March and 1 April; and Western Meadowlarks on 1 and 9 April, respectively. Although there was little food available for them, one year Bohemian Waxwings, listed as rare, paid a visit on 3 March.

Grose also contributed to the Natural History Department of *The Saskatchewan Farmer*. From Lanigan he contributed columns about "The Grebe" (Jan. 1915, pp. 22-23), "The Snowbird" (Feb. 1915, p.4), "Gophers and Squirrels" (March 1915, p. 21), and from Lang, a column on "The Blackbirds" (November 1915) which occasioned the next month a letter correcting his mention of the Boat-tailed and Purple Grackles from the well-known naturalist, Stewart Criddle of Aweme, Manitoba.

His bird sightings from Mortlach in 1921 and 1923 are also extant, in the same format as the 1915-16 list, with first date, date first common and some nest records. His 70 species in 1921 included a nest of the Long-eared Owl found on 8 June in an aspen 15 feet above ground, containing 2 downy young and 2 piping eggs, and a Short-eared Owl nest with 8 eggs on 26 May. Chestnut-collared Longspurs first appeared on 16 April and became common on 24 April; McCown's Longspurs appeared on 22 April and became common on 30 April.

In 1923, he listed 60 species with 12 nest records, including a Say's

Phoebe nest on 24 May and his first-ever nest of a Western Kingbird on 19 June in a maple tree.

Much of the Grose bird's egg collection is in the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History. There is a Western Kingbird set of five eggs from Medicine Hat, Alberta on 12 June 1912, as well as a Bank Swallow set. In Saskatchewan he collected sets of 60 species beginning with 16 sets at Lanigan in 1913 which included both Horned and Eared Grebe sets, each of 7 eggs. He visited the Quill Lakes in 1914 and 1915 to get sets of the Double-crested Cormorant, American White Pelican and Great Blue Heron. Included are a set of 10 Ruffed Grouse eggs from Melville on 10 June 1918; a single Sandhill Crane egg from Birmingham on 30 May 1918; a set of 10 Greater Prairie Chicken eggs from Melville on 10 June 1918, and a set of 4 McCown's Longspur eggs from Lucky Lake in 1931. His House Wren sets of 6 and 7 eggs showed the adaptability of this species before bird houses were available; the first, at Lanigan on 30 May 1913 was in an old tin can in an outhouse and the second at Melville on 10 June 1920 was in a coat sleeve. In 1924, the year he was principal at Wapella, he added only five species to his collection: Willet, Black-billed Cuckoo, Long-eared Owl, Blue Jay, Loggerhead Shrike. At Lucky Lake his interest in oology waned, and, with one exception, he ceased taking full sets except for a set of three Cooper's Hawks on 4 June 1926. He collected two eggs of the Killdeer in 1923, two Baltimore Oriole eggs on 10 June 1928, and three Yellow-shafted Flicker eggs in 1933, and, with no date given, collected a single egg of the Black-billed Magpie.

While at Lang, Saskatchewan, in

1918, Grose kept one of the earliest Saskatchewan records of plant phenology. His list of plants, complete with their Latin names, gave the first flowering date for 86 species. Similar lists for Mortlach recorded flowering dates for 75 species in 1921, but only 35 species in 1923.

His daughter, Eileen Blanchet, wrote from British Columbia in 1988 to tell me that her father's "egg col-

lection at home was always a part of my upbringing since it was a cherished experience to look at them and handle them. I remember being taken to the museum to see his collection there, which was more extensive than the one he kept at home." Later in his life, Eileen's father gave encouragement to a farm lad from the next hamlet at Tullis, up the line from Lucky Lake. The lad's name was Frank Roy.

HARRY C. GROSE, 1887-1992

J. FRANK ROY, 650 Costigan Way, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7J 3R2

A pioneer Saskatchewan birder, teacher, pharmacist, and undertaker, Harry Grose died in Calgary, 20 April 1992. At the time of his death he was 105, Calgary's oldest citizen and one of the oldest persons in Canada.

Harry Grose was born on a farm at Goldstone, Ontario, 15 January 1887. A precocious child, he was allowed to attend school at the age of five and entered high school in Guelph at age 11. Like so many children born on the farm, he developed an early and lasting interest in nature. He attended Queen's University, Kingston, but before graduating decided to move West with the flood of settlers that were then beginning to populate the Prairies.

In 1905, at the ripe old age of 18, Harry landed in Manitoba. A short time later he moved to Regina where he completed his teacher training at what was then called "Normal School." His first teaching job was at

Otthon, Saskatchewan, southwest of Yorkton.

While teaching he continued his study of birds, compiling migration dates, looking for nests, and adding eggs to an impressive egg collection he had begun in Ontario. Most of his egg collection was later donated to the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History. He involved his students too, inspiring in them an active interest in everything from astronomy to botany. [His compilations of the spring and summer flowering plants of Lang (1918, 86 species) and Mortlach (1921, 75 species) still extant, carefully identify species by both their English and Latin names, noting periods of peak flowering.] In 1911, during his last year at Foam Lake, he even raised a family of six skunks. At the end of the school year when he decided to move, he sent his pets to the famous author-naturalist, Ernest Thompson Seton.



Harry, Alma and Elva Grose, Lang, SK, 1917.

Even though he had filed for a homestead in September 1908 (a quarter section near Foam Lake), he managed to continue teaching as he developed his farm. Between 1908 and 1911, he broke 30 acres of land, built a house, barn and granary on the property, and taught at Sheho and Foam Lake.

In 1911, after putting in his crop, Harry moved west to Medicine Hat to teach for a term before returning east. In April 1912 he was granted title to his homestead and that summer, on 8 July, married Alma Olson, a native of Melville, whom he had met in Yorkton. In the years that followed, they became parents of three girls: Elva, now deceased; Eileen, who lives in Mission, B.C.; and Elinor, whose home is Vancouver.

With new responsibilities, he decided in 1913 to move into high school teaching, first at Lanigan,

where he served two years, and then at Lang, where he taught from 1915 to 1919. While at Lang, he began an apprenticeship in pharmacy. For four years he worked after school at George McCuaig's drugstore, meanwhile taking correspondence courses from Queen's University. In 1920, he finally completed his degree at the University of Saskatchewan. Despite his success at university (he had been asked to teach pharmacy classes while studying), he moved to Mortlach and Wapella to teach for another five years before purchasing the drugstore at Lucky Lake in 1925.

He served the townspeople and farmers of Lucky Lake for the next 28 years. A natural leader, he saw what needed to be done and did it. Fond of sports, he coached young people in tennis and baseball. He developed a small park in the town, planted many of the trees that now grace the streets of Lucky Lake, and



H.C. Grose, Calgary, 1987.

served as reeve, member of the school board, and chairman of the hospital board. Because he realized the community needed an undertaker, he learned that trade too, taking on the job as had his fellow naturalist Dave Santy in Beechy, the next major town down the line. An accomplished organist and pianist, he played the organ at the United Church whenever the regular organist was away.

When he sold his business in 1953, he and Alma moved to Calgary, supposedly to retire. Alma died in 1955, and in 1956, at age 69, Harry decided to return to work, this time at Douglas Drugs. In 1957, he married Pauline Crouch. He continued to work as full-time pharmacist until the store closed in 1976. Retired (for the second time!) at the age of 89, Harry wondered what he should

do next.

Until he was past 100, Harry gardened, played the piano, enjoyed oil painting, wrote long and interesting letters, read widely, and pursued his interests in nature, people, and politics. His activities curtailed finally by loss of vision, he continued, with Pauline's help, to face life with zest and courage until he died peacefully on 20 April 1992, after suffering a stroke a week earlier.

Harry Grose will long be remembered by those who knew him; quiet, unassuming, determined, a dedicated student of all things natural, he was one of Saskatchewan's pioneer naturalists and builders. And because he wore work shoes, Harry has left his footprints in the sands of time.

EDITORIAL

It is almost 1994. Technical changes continue to occur so rapidly it is difficult to keep up. For example, fax machines were unheard of (at least by me) ten years ago and now they are considered to be essential office equipment. What's more, fax machines may soon be obsolete because of the rise in the use of the more efficient, and more environmentally friendly, electronic mailing systems.

Appropriate technology is only one of the many facets of our busy lives that is changing at breakneck speed. Public awareness of the environment is changing, too. People know now that the environment is a big concern; it affects every part of life, so much so in fact that it is inextricably linked to the bottom line.

There is no need to digress into a discussion of the importance of linking environment to the economy — especially during these recessionary times — because what is needed isn't more problem identification. We know what the problems are. We need solutions to the problems.

The nineties are the time for part-

nerships, a time for the independent sector, the government sector and the business sector to work together toward sustainable solutions that benefit you and me.

How quickly things change. Look, for example, at endangered species. When people first began realizing that one of the effects of human actions was to kill off other species, such as the dodo, the general consensus seemed to be to protect certain species at almost any cost. First it was the magnificent or cute animals, such as the panda, that were offered protection. Then someone realized that ugly, small, little-known species were also dying off. More effort went into protecting a wider variety of species. Now, the efforts are being put into protecting areas of land as habitat for endangered species — hence, endangered spaces.

What is the best way, ultimately, to protect biological diversity on 'natural' areas in our prairie ecosystem? Who knows? The answer is to be found by scientists, amateur naturalists, government consultants, farmers, woodlot owners, and other land users — together.



A

- Achatia distincta* - Distinct Quaker 84
 Adams, Pat, Nature Saskatchewan
 Fellow 231, photo 232
 Carol Blenkin, photo 235
 Bernard de Vries, photo 232
 Melanie Elliott, photo 231
 Mary Gilliland, photo 233
 Bernie Gollop, photo 235
 Mary and Stuart Houston, photo 233
 Dieter Martin, photo 235
 Nature Saskatchewan Board, photo 234
 Myrna Pearman, photo 235
 Quiet moment, photo 236
 Frank Roy, photo 232
 Stan Shadick, photo 231
 Jim Slimmon, photo 236
 Frank Switzer, photo 234
 Jim Wedgwood, photo 233
 Michael Williams, photo 234
Aglais milberti - Milbert's Tortoise Shell 135
Agriades rusticus - Rustic Blue 133
 Alberta
 Beaverhill Lake, birds 88, 110, 160, mammals 179
 Bragg Creek, lepidoptera 132
 Buffalo Lake, birds 88
 Calgary, birds 88, 91, 209, lepidoptera 132
 Cooking Lake, birds 88
 Crimson Lake Provincial Park, birds 199
 Dinosaur Park, lepidoptera 84
 Eagle Lake, birds 88
 Edmonton, lepidoptera 84, 91, birds 203
 Fish Butte, lepidoptera 132
 Manyberries, lepidoptera 84
 Medicine Hat, lepidoptera 84
 Namaka Lake, birds 88
 Waterton Lakes National Park, birds 209
Aletia oxygala - Lesser Wainscot 83
 Alexander, Stuart A.
 Bristleless Dwarf Spike-Rush at the Quill Lakes: a third Canadian record. 75
 Allen, Norma
 "Wooden" you like to see these. 138
Amblyscirtes vialis - Roadside Skipper 133
Anarta cordigera - Canadian Catocaline Anarta 82
Anartomima secedens - Anarta Mimic 82
Anepia capusularis - Capsule Moth 84
Anepia circumvadis - Prairie Capsule

Moth 82

- Anhimella contrahens* - Brown Stylus 83
 Appleby, Alan, photo 234
Artemisia cana - sagebrush 129
 Asai, J.
 Pat Adams, photo 232
Atalopedes campestris - Sachem 193, photo 194, 195
 Award, Canada 125 medal 231, presentation photo 233
 Award, Cliff Shaw 231
 Award, Conservation 231, presentation photo 232
 Award, Larry Morgotch 231, recipient photo 231
 Award, Nature Saskatchewan Fellows 231, photos 231, 232, 233
 Award, Weyburn Bird-a-thon 231, photo 234

B

- Bancroft, Jean
 Further observations of albinism in birds. 203
 Observations on the dove family. 150
 Barr, Keith
 A hunting Osprey, photo cover no. 3
 Pair of Piping Plovers, photo 37
 The photographs I never got! 201
 Piping Plover chick, photo cover no. 1
 Bat, Little Brown 213, photo 213, 214
 Bat, Red 215
 Bear, Black 219, photo 220, 221
 Belanger, Ray A.
 First identification of House Finches in Weyburn. 155
Bembidion lanciphroides - ground beetle 72
 Berthiaume, Bob, photo 234
 Binnie, Betty
 Little Blue Heron at Lumsden. 186
 Biodiversity 1
 Bittner, Ronald A.
 Bluebird nestboxes: unusual designs. 49
 Blackbird, Brewer's 203
 Blackbird, Red-winged 32
 Blackbird, Rusty 20
 Blackbird, Yellow-headed 32
 Blenkin, Carol, photo 235
 Bluebird, Mountain 49, 211
 Bobcat 52, 181
 Bogdan, Flossie
 Albino grackle, sketch 205

- Hawks near Avonlea. 226
 Partial albino starling, sketch 205
 Partial albino White-throated Sparrow, sketch 205
 Some albino birds from Avonlea. 204
 Strange nesting behaviour. 62
 White-throated Sparrow, sketch 205
Boloria bellona - Meadow Fritillary 135
Boloria eunomia - Bog Fritillary 133
Boloria freija - Freija Fritillary 135
Boloria frigga - Frigga's Fritillary 135
Boloria selene - Silver-bordered Fritillary 135
Boloria titania - Titania Fritillary 135
 Book Review
 Birds of East-Central Saskatchewan -
 Kelvington to Kelsey Trail.
 HOOPER 125
 Conservation biology. FIEDLER and
 JAIN 183
 Knee high in nature: spring in Alberta.
 HAYLEY and WISHART 183
 A prairie alphabet. MOORE AND
 BANNATYNE-CUGNET 222
 Saving American birds: T. Gilbert
 Pearson and the founding of the
 Audubon movement. ORR 222
 The wheatgrass mechanism: science
 and imagination in the Canadian
 landscape. GAYTON 185
 Brace, Tim
 Coyote and magpie behaviour at
 White-Tailed Deer carcasses. 60
 Brazier, Frank H.
 Black Guillemot seen in Regina. 206
 Flicker exploits hornet and wasp
 nests in winter. 85
 Hooded Warbler in Regina. 154
 Yellow-Billed Cuckoo sighting in
 Regina. 34
 Brigham, R. Mark
 Little Brown Bat, photo 213, 214
 Brigham, R. Mark and Arnold K. James
 A true albino Little Brown Bat,
 Myotis lucifugus, from
 Saskatchewan. 213
 British Columbia, lepidoptera 84
 Kamloops, birds 203
 Bufflehead 29
 Bunting, Lark 30, photos 30-32
 Bunting, Snow 11
C
 Caribou, Woodland 52
Carterocephalus palaemon - Arctic
 Skipper 134
Celastrina argiolus - Spring Azure 134
Ceononympa inornata - Inornate
 Ringlet 135
Cercyonis oetus - Dark Wood Nymph 135
Cercyonis pegala - Common Wood
 Nymph 135
 Charlton, Mabel
 Common Nighthawk nest, photo 153
 The elusive Virginia Rail. 102
 Male House Finch, photo 156
 Nighthawk on the golf course. 153
 Virginia Rail nest, photo 102
 Chickadee, Black-capped 10, 92
 Chickadee, Boreal 20
Chlosyne palla - Northern Checkerspot
 135
Cirsium arvense - Canada Thistle 193
Colias christina - Christina Sulphur 134
Colias gigantea - Giant Sulphur 134
Colias interior - Pink-edged Sulphur 134
Colias philodice - Clouded Sulphur 134
 Collister, Doug
 Great Gray Owl at nest, photo 199
 Collister, Doug and Howard Giles
 A late nesting of the Great Gray Owl. 199
 Coot, American 29
 Cormorant, Double-crested 106, 112, 203
 COSEWIC - Committee on the Status of
 Endangered Wildlife in
 Canada 36, mammals 179
 Cottontail, Eastern 52
 Cottontail, Nuttall's 130
 Cowbird, Brown-headed 109
 Coyote 52, 60, 179
 Crane, Sandhill, no. 4, p. ii
 Crane, Whooping, no. 4, p. ii
Crocigrapha normani - Norman's Quaker
 83
 Crossbill, Red 10
 Crow, American 203
 Cuckoo, Black-billed 34
 Cuckoo, Yellow-billed 34
 Cumming, Enid, photo 110
D
 Dale, Brenda
 Kamikaze, the Swainson's Hawk. 61
Dargida procincta - The Girdler 83
 de Vries, Bernard
 Conservation Award 231, photo 232
 Deer, Mule 130
 Deer, White-tailed 52, 60, 130
 Dekker, Dick
 Tree-climbing by Long-tailed Weasel:
 an anti-predator strategy? 179
 Didiuk, Andy, photo 234

Discestra chunka - Chunka Cutworm 80
Discestra crotchii - Crotch's Discestra 80
Discestra farnhami - Farnham's Discestra 79 -
Discestra hamata - Hamilton Discestra 79
Discestra mutata - The Changeling 79
Discestra obesula - Obese Discestra 79
Discestra oregonica - The Oregonian 79
Discestra trifolii - Clover Cutworm 79
Disporum trachycarpum - Fairy Bells 197
Dobie, Donald
 Break-up. no. 2, p. ii
 Hummingbird memory. 227
 The rescue. no. 3, p. ii
 Sandhill Cranes use cosmetics? no. 4, p. ii
 The sky was falling. no. 1, p. ii
Dodge, Carman
 Raven predation. 178
Dog, Prairie 130
Donauer, Kathleen, photo 234
Dove, Mourning 150
Dove, Rock 20, 150, 178
Dove, White Rock 150
Dove, Zebra 150
Dowitcher, Long-billed 78
Doyle, Val
 Saw-whet Owl, photo 172
Duck, American Black 29
Duck, Ring-necked 104
Duncan, James R.
 Snow-plunging Barred Owl, photo 167

E

Eagle, Bald 20, 92, 165, 178, 206, photo 176
Eagle, Golden 20, 131
Egira curialis - Curialis Woodling 83
Egira dolosa - Grieving Woodling 83
Egira rubrica - Ruddy Woodling 83
Egret, Great 63
Elaeagnus commutata - silverberry 33
Eleocharis acicularis - Needle Spike-rush 76
Eleocharis parvula - Bristleless Dwarf Spike-rush 75
Eleocharis pauciflora 76
Elliott, Melanie
 1993 Larry Morgotch Award 231, photo 231
Epidemia helloides - Purplish Copper 134
Epidemia mariposa - Reakirt's Copper 134
Erebia discoidalis - Red-disked Alpine 135

Erebia epipsodia - Common Alpine 135
Erema mexicana - Mexican Sulphur 72
Ermine 179
Erskine, A. J. (Tony).
 Extravagant nest defense - unlikely to pay off. 103
Erynnis icelus - Dreamy Dusky Wing 134
Erynnis persius - Persius Dusky Wing 134
Euchloe ausonides - Large Marble 134
Euchloe creusa - Northern Marble 134
Euphydryas phaeton - Baltimore 193
Euphyes ruricola - Dun Skipper 193
Euptoieta claudia - Variegated Fritillary 133
Everes amyntula - Western Tailed Blue 134

F

Falcon, Prairie 20, 29, 229
Faronta diffusa - Wheat-Head Armyworm 83
Finch, House 11, 113, 155, photo 114-117, 156, 186
Finch, Purple 116, 155
Flicker, Northern 20, 85
Friesen, Victor C.
 Network of diggings of Northern Pocket Gopher, photo 123
 Northern Pocket Gophers occupy new territory. 122
 Winter's onset, poem 224
 Winter, photo 224
Fox, Red 52, 177, 180, photo cover no. 2, cover no. 4
Fox, Swift 52, 130

G

Gilliland, Mary
 Nature Saskatchewan Fellow 231, photo 233
Gilroy, Doug
 Red Fox, photo, cover no. 2
Glaucopsyche lygdamus - Silvery Blue 134
Godwit, Hudsonian 78
Goldeneye, Common 20
Goldfinch, American 217
Gollop, J. B., photo 235
 Northern winter scene, photo 35
 Winter, photo 228
Goose, Canada 20, 62, 63, 203, 206, 208
Goossen, J. Paul
 Little Gull sighted at Buffalo Lake, Alberta. 88
Gopher, Northern Pocket 52, 122, 124

photo of diggings 123
 Goshawk, Northern 20, 199, 226
 Grackle, Common 150, sketch 205
 Grebe, Red-necked 201
 Grosbeak, Evening 20, 29
 Grosbeak, Pine 10
 Grose, Harry C. 239, 241, photo 242, 243
 Grouse, Ruffed 10
 Grouse, Sharp-tailed 10
 Guillemot, Black 186, 206, photo 207
 Guillemot, Pigeon 206
 Gull, California 106
 Gull, Franklin's 88
 Gull, Glaucous-winged 208
 Gull, Little 88
 Gull, Ring-billed 106, 208
 Gyrfalcon 20

H

Hadenella pergentilis - Little Haden 79
 Hare, Snowshoe 52, 181
 Harrier, Northern 29
 Harris, Wayne C., compiler,
 51st annual Christmas bird count -
 1992. 10
 Saskatchewan Christmas mammal
 count - 1992. 52
 Hawk, Cooper's 130
 Hawk, Ferruginous 30, 62, 129, photo 17
 Hawk, Marsh 226
 Hawk, Red-shouldered 105
 Hawk, Swainson's 61, photo 62
Hecatera sutrina - The Cobbler 82
 Henderson, Darcy
 A first timer's experience in Grasslands
 National Park. 129
 Heron, Great Blue 11
 Heron, Little Blue 186
Hesperia comma assiniboia - Assiniboia
 Skipper 194
 Hobson, Keith
 Adult male American Redstart banded at
 Delta, photo 111
 Canada Warbler banded at Delta, photo
 109
 Enid Cumming banding a Magnolia
 Warbler, photo 110
 Status of neotropical migrant songbirds
 in Manitoba - time for a second
 look. 109
 Hohn, E. Otto
 Adult American Red Squirrel, sketch 127
 How do squirrels carry their young? 127
Homorthodes furfurata - Scurfy Quaker
 83
 Hooper, Donald F., photo 73, 189

The joys and trials of a naturalist. 72
 Hooper, Margaret
 Don Hooper with a young magpie, photo
 189
 Hooper, Ronald R.
 Check-list of Saskatchewan Moths. Part
 11: Penmans, Arches, Armyworms,
 and Stylus Moths. 79
 Possible Saskatchewan sighting of Black
 Vulture. 105
 Saskatchewan sighting of a Red-
 shouldered Hawk. 105
 Hornbeck, Hugh
 Great Egret. 63
 Hornet, Bald-faced 85
 Hornet, White-faced 86
 Horton, Bob
 Male House Finch, photo 117
 Horton, Jean
 House Finches in Manitoba, photo
 115, 116
 Houston, C. Stuart
 Canada 125 medal 231, photo 233
 The natural history contributions of
 H.C. Grose. 239
 The talents of Donald Hooper. 188
 Houston, Mary
 Canada 125 medal 231, photo 233
 Hummingbird, Ruby-throated 143, 147,
 226, 227, photos 148, 149, 227
Hylolycaena hyllus - Bronze Copper 134
 I
Incisalia augustinus - Brown Elfin 134
Incisalia eryphon - Western Pine Elfin
 134
Incisalia polia - Hoary Elfin 134
 Irvine, Barbara
 An unusually tame Canada Goose. 63

J

Jaeger, Long-tailed 157, photo 157
 Jaeger, Parasitic 157, photo 158
 Jaeger, Pomarine 157
 James, Paul, photo 232
 Jay, Blue 10, 87, 150, photos 89, 90
 Jay, Gray 20
 Jay, Steller's 87
 Jones, B.
 Observation of squirrel carrying young.
 226
 Junco, Dark-eyed 20, 204
Juniperus horizontalis - Creeping Juniper
 130

K

Kinglet, Golden-crowned 20

- Koes, R.F.
 Long-tailed Jaeger, photo 157
 Parasitic Jaeger, photo 158
- Koonz, W.H.
 Mountain Bluebird nests in clothes
 dryer vent. 211
- Koonz, William H.
 Northern Pocket Gophers above
 ground in winter. 124
- Krivda, Walter
 Road kills of migrating garter snakes
 at The Pas, Manitoba. 197
- L**
- Lacanobia atlantica* - Atlanta Arches 81
Lacanobia dodii - Dod's Arches 82
Lacanobia grandis - Pale-banded Arches
 81
Lacanobia legitima - Striped Garden
 Catarpillar 82
Lacanobia lilacina - Lilac Arches 82
Lacanobia liquida - Liquid Arches 82
Lacanobia lutra - Darling Arches 81,
 photo 81
Lacanobia nevadae - Nevada Arches 81
Lacanobia radix - Garden Arches 81
Lacanobia subjuncta - Harnessed
 Arches 81
Lacanobia tacoma - Tacoma Arches 81
Lacinipolia anguina - Snaky Arches 82
Lacinipolia longiclava - Longiclava
 Arches 82
Lacinipolia lorea - Bridled Arches 83
Lacinipolia lustralis - Lustrous Arches 82
Lacinipolia meditata - The Thinker 82
Lacinipolia olivacea - Olive Arches 83
Lacinipolia renigera - Kidney-spotted
 Arches 83
Lacinipolia vicina - Small Grey Arches 83
- Lahrman, Fred W.
 A Glaucous-winged Gull seen in
 Regina. 208
- Langelier, Terry
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird, photo 227
- Langelier, Terry and Randy
 The hummingbird epic continues. 226
- Lark, Horned 20
- Lasiestra* sp. - Seal 82
Lasionycta sp. - Seal 82
- Lemming, Northern Bog 73
- Leucania anteoclara* - Anteoclara
 Wainscot 83
Leucania commoides - Comma
 Wainscot 83
Leucania insueta - Heterodox Wainscot
 83
- Leucania multilinea* - Many-lined
 Wainscot 83
Leucania phragmatidicola - Phragmites
 Wainscot 83
Licinipolia renigera - Kidney-spotted
 Arches 83
- Liebelt, Gilberta
 Swainson's Hawk, photo 62
Limenitis arthemis - White Admiral 135
Limenitis lorquini - Lorquin' Admiral 133
 Longspur, Chestnut-collared 30, 32
 Longspur, Lapland 20
 Longspur, McCown's 32
 Loon, Yellow-billed 11
Lycaeides idas - Northern Blue 134
- Lynch, Wayne
 Ferruginous Hawk, photo 17
- Lynx 52, 181
- M**
- MacKenzie, Jean
 Whistling wings, poem 225
- Magpie, Black-billed 10, 60, 63, 203
- Mallard 20, 104, 187
- Mamestra configurata* - Bertha
 Armyworm 80
Mamestra curialis - Eastern Armyworm
 84
- Manitoba, birds 30, 88
 Altona, birds 120
 Aweme, birds 159, lepidoptera 84
 Birtle, mammals 182
 Blumenort, birds 227
 Brandon, birds 113
 Brightstone Sand Hills Provincial Forest,
 mammals 177
 Bruxelles, mammals 124
 Carberry, birds 117
 Carman, birds 120
 Cartwright, lepidoptera 84
 Churchill, birds 157, 161, 186
 Dauphin, birds 47
 Deloraine, birds 159, 160
 Delta Marsh, birds 111
 Dog Lake, birds 63
 East Braintree, insects 193
 Flin Flon, birds 165
 Gimli, birds 159
 Grand Beach, birds 159
 Grand Marais, birds 203
 Haywood, mammals 215
 Holland, birds 170
 Husavick, birds 159
 Lac du Bonnet, birds 167, mammals 177
 Lake Dauphin, birds 175
 Lake of the Prairies, birds 159

- Lake Manitoba, birds 111, 174
 Lake St. Martin, birds 159
 Lake Winnipeg, birds 159
 Lake Winnipegosis, birds 159, 175
 Landry Lake, reptiles 197
 Mafeking, birds 104
 Minnedosa, mammals 217
 Moose Lake, reptiles 197
 Morden, birds 120
 Niverville, birds 159
 Oak Hammock Marsh, birds 159
 Pelican Island, birds 159
 Pilot Mound, birds 170
 Pinawa, mammals 215
 Pine Falls, birds 159
 Riding Mountain National Park, birds 47, 211, mammals 181
 Roblin, birds 159
 Russell, birds 47
 St. Ambroise, birds 159
 St. Boniface, birds 113
 Scanterbury, birds 159
 Seven Sisters Falls, birds 159
 Southern Indian Lake, birds 159
 Steinbach, birds 143
 Swan River, birds 63
 The Pas, reptiles 197
 Thompson, birds 159, 161
 Wabowden, birds 165
 Waskada, birds 159
 Waterhen Lake, birds 174
 Waterhen River, birds 174
 Webb Lake, birds 165
 Whitewater Lake, birds 159
 Whytewold, birds 150
 Winkler, birds 120
 Winnipeg, birds 63, 113, 150, 159, 160, 167, 171
 Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Organization, birds 146, 147
 Map
 Distribution of Bristleless Dwarf Spike-rush in Saskatchewan, 76
 Elbow Lake, Manitoba, 165
 Location of 1992 Counts, 15
 Piping Plover locations, excluding the Missouri Coteau, 42
 Piping Plover locations in the Missouri Coteau, 43
 Southern Manitoba showing the river valleys, 118
 Marten, American 52, 179
 Martin, Dieter, photo 235
 McLeod, Allan
 Home grown ducks in Regina. 187
 McRae, Doug
 A third Black Guillemot from Churchill, Manitoba. 186
Melanchra adjuncta - White-spotted Arches 81
Melanchra assimilis - Black Arches 81
Melanchra picta - Painted Arches 81
Melanchra pulverulenta - Powdered Arches 81
 Memoriam
 H.C. Grose 239, 241
 Donald Hooper 188
 Merlin 20, 91, photo 92, 93
 Merlin, Richardson's 91
 Mink, American 179
 Morgotch, Larry
 Red Squirrel, photo 218
Morrisonia evicta - Bicolored Woodling 83
 Mouse, Red-backed 73
N
 Nature Saskatchewan
 1993 Annual General Meeting 231
 Balance sheet 238
 Statement of financial activities 237
Nephelodes minians - Shaded Umber 83
 Nero, Robert W.
 Another Red Squirrel bird-kill. 217
 Evidence of snow-plunging by Boreal and Barred Owls. 166
 Flicker's feathers, poem 225
 Lark Bunting - western prairie marvel. 30
 Male Lark Bunting carrying weedstalk, photo 32
 Male Lark Bunting in extreme post-copulatory posture, photo 30
 Male Lark Bunting in post-copulatory display, photo 31
 Northern Flying Squirrel and Red Bat caught on barbed-wire. 215
 Probable Barn Owl records for Manitoba. 170
 Red Fox - Common Raven interaction. 177
 Newfoundland, lepidoptera 84
 Nighthawk, Common 153, photo 153
 Nightheron, Black-crowned 150
 Nova Scotia, lepidoptera 84, birds 204
 Nuthatch, Red-breasted 20
 Nuthatch, White-breasted 20, 29
Nymphalis antiopa - Mourning Cloak 133
Nymphalis californica - California Tortoise Shell 135
Nymphalis vaualbum - Compton Tortoise Shell 135

O

Oarisma garita - Garita Skipperling 134
Oeneis jutta - Jutta Arctic 135
Oeneis macounii - Macoun's Arctic 135
Oeneis uhleri - Uhler's Arctic 135
 O'Grady, Rhonda
 Hummingbird sequel. 147
 Juvenile Ruby-throated Hummingbird,
 photo 148
 Makeshift tropical forest for wintering
 hummingbird, photo 149
 Oliphant, Lynn W.
 Saskatoon Merlin on winter perch,
 photo 93
 Ontario, birds 88, 161
 Lake of the Woods, birds 160
Orthodes crenulata - Rustic Quaker 84
Orthodes cynica - Cynical Quaker 84
Orthosia hibisci - Variable Penman 83,
 photo 82
Orthosia pacifica - Western Penman 84
Orthosia revicta - Beautiful Penman 83
Orthosia segregata - Segregate Penman
 83
 Osprey 105, 173, photo cover no. 3
 Ovenbird 112
 Owl, Barn 170
 Owl, Barred 167, 170, photo 167
 Owl, Boreal 170
 Owl, Boreal (Tengmalm's) 166
 Owl, Burrowing 30
 Owl, Great Horned 20, 62, 170, 215
 Owl, Grey Gray, 165 166, 177, 199,
 photo 199
 Owl, Long-eared 166
 Owl, Northern Saw-whet 170, photo 172
 Owl, Short-eared 166
 Owl, Snowy 20, 170

P

Papestra cristifera - Crested Arches 82
Papestra quadrata ingravis - Quadrata
 Arches 82
Papilio canadensis - Canadian Tiger
 Swallowtail 134
Papilio zelicaon X *Papilio machaon* -
 Anise X Old World Swallowtail 133
Parnassius phoebus - Phoebus'
 Parnassian 134
 Parsons, Robert J. and Jean I. Horton
 First nesting record of the House
 Finch in Manitoba. 113
 Partridge, Gray 10
 Pearman, Myrna, photo 235
 Pelican, American White 106
 Pheasant, Ring-necked 20, 203

Phyciodes batesii - Tawny Crescent 135
Phyciodes morpheus - Morpheus
 Crescent 135
Phyciodes pratensis - Field Crescent 135
Pieris napi - Mustard White 134
Pieris rapae - Cabbage Butterfly 133
 Pigeon, Band-tailed 150
 Pike, Christine, photo 234
 Pinel, Harold W.
 First verified record of Williamson's
 Sapsucker for Alberta. 209
 Pipit, Sprague's 30
 Pivnick, Ken
 Grasslands National Park insect
 collection. 196
 Pivnick, Ken, Fred Thornton, Joce
 Bowman, and David Struthers
 Agricultural policy: Its effects on
 nature, agriculture and the land in
 Saskatchewan, Introduction. 3
Plebejus saepiolus - Greenish Blue 134
 Plover, Piping 36, photo cover no. 1, 37
 Poems
 Flicker's feathers 225
 Whistling wings 225
 Winter's onset 224
Polia detracta - Dingy Arches 81
Polia discalis - Large Grey Arches 80
Polia goodelli - Pointed Arches 81
Polia imbrifera - Cloudy Arches 80
Polia nimbosea mystica - Mystic Arches 80
Polia nugatis - Frivolous Arches 81
Polia obscura - Obscure Arches 81
Polia propodea - McCabe's Arches 80
Polia purpurissata - Pale-tinted Arches 80
Polia rogenhoferi - Rogenhofer's Arches
 80
Polites draco - Draco Skipper 134
Polites mystic - Long Dash 134, 193
Polygonia faunus - Green Anglewing 135
Polygonia progne - Gray Anglewing 135
Polygonia satyrus - Satyr Anglewing 135
Polygonia zephyrus - Zephyr Anglewing
 135
Pontia occidentalis - Western White 133
Potamogeton pectinatus - Sago
 Pondweed 77
 Pronghorn 129
Protorthodes akalus - Akalus Stylus 84
Protorthodes curtica - Dingy Stylus 84
Protorthodes oviduca - Island Stylus 83
Protorthodes utahensis - Utah Quaker 83
Pseudaletia unipuncta - Armyworm 83
Pseudorthodes vecors - Small Brown
 Quaker 84

Q

Quebec, lepidoptera 84, 88

R

Rabbit, White-tailed Jack 52

Racer, Eastern Yellow-bellied 130

Rail, Virginia 102, photo 102

Rainey, Brian

Black Guillemot, photo 207

Ranson, Harley S.

House Finches in Tisdale in 1992. 186

Rattlesnake, Prairie 130

Raven, Common 20, 177, 178, 186

Redpoll, Common 20, 203

Redpoll, Hoary 20, 203

Redstart, American 112, photo 111

Richardson, Judith

Cliff Shaw Award 231

Unusual Ruby-throated Hummingbird encounters and a late fall record. 143

Roberts, Jos. K.

Northern Wheatear sighted in Regina. 229

Robin, American 20, 203

Roney, Keith

Darling Arches (*Lacanobia lutra*), photo 81

Rosy Penman (*Sideridis rosea*), photo 80

Variable Penman (*Osthosia hibisci*), photo 82

Roney, Keith and Ray Longmuir

1991 White Pelican and Double-Crested Cormorant nest census in Saskatchewan. 106

Roy, Frank

Harry C. Grose, 1887-1992. 241

Nature Saskatchewan Fellow 231, photo 232

Ruggles, Jaimie

Red Fox, photo cover no. 4

S

Sandpiper, Stilt 78

Sandpiper, Upland 30

Sapsucker, Williamson's 209

Sarcobactus vermiculatus - greasewood 130

Saskatchewan

Abernethy, birds 49

Abernethy-Katepwa Lake, CBC 11, CMC 53

Antelope Lake, birds 40

Archerwill, birds 203

Armit, CBC 11, CMC 53

Avonlea, birds 62, 226

Aylsham, lepidoptera 79

Bankend, birds 105

Basin Lake, birds 106

Bethune, CBC 11, CMC 53

Beverley, lepidoptera 81

Big Muddy Lake, birds 40, CBC 11, CMC 53

Big Quill - Houghton Lakes, birds 38

Biggar, CBC 11, CMC 53

Birch Hills, CBC 11, CMC 53

Bjorkdale, lepidoptera 83

Boggy Creek, birds 86

Bresaylor, birds no. 1, p. ii; no. 4, p. ii

Bromhead, CBC 11, CMC 53

Buffalo Narrows, lepidoptera 80

Cabri, CBC 11, CMC 53

Candle Lake, CBC 11, CMC 53, lepidoptera 81

Carragana, birds 188, plants 72

Carrot River, lepidoptera 82, 83

Chaplin Lake, birds 38

Chelan, birds 63

Christopher Lake, lepidoptera 80

Churchill Lake, birds 106

Clark's Crossing, CBC 11, CMC 53

Craven, CBC 11, CMC 53

Creighton, lepidoptera 83

Crooked Lake, CBC 11, lepidoptera 81, CMC 53

Cumberland House, lepidoptera 80

Cutknife, lepidoptera 80

Cypress Hills, lepidoptera 79

Cypress Lake, birds 106

Dilke, CBC 11

Dore Lake, birds 106

Douglas Provincial Park, lepidoptera 80

Duck Mountain Provincial Park, lepidoptera 81

Duval, CBC 11, CMC 54

East Coteau Lake, birds 40

Edam, CBC 12

Edna Lake, birds 40

Elsie Lake, birds 40

Emma Lake, birds 63

Endeavour, CBC 12, CMC 52

Estevan, CBC 12, CMC 52

Eston, birds 229

Estuary, lepidoptera 80, 83

Fenton, CBC 12, CMC 54

Fife Lake, birds 40, CBC 12

Fort Qu'Appelle, birds 104, CBC 12, CMC 54, lepidoptera 81

Fort Walsh, CBC 12, CMC 54

Gardiner Dam, CBC 11

Gardiner Dam, birds 38, CMC 54

Glentworth, lepidoptera 82
 Glidden, birds 229
 Good Spirit Lake, CBC 12, CMC 54
 Gordon Lake, lepidoptera 80
 Govenlock, CBC 12, CMC 52
 Grand Centre - Pierceland, CBC 12, CMC 55
 Grasslands National Park, 129, CBC 12, CMC 55, insects 196
 Greenwater Provincial Park, lepidoptera 80
 Harlan, lepidoptera 80
 Hasbala Lake, lepidoptera 82
 Hoey, birds 203
 Hudson Bay, CBC 12, lepidoptera 82, mammals 73
 Humboldt, CBC 12, CMC 55
 Ile-a-la-Crosse, lepidoptera 82
 Indian Head, CBC 12, CMC 55, lepidoptera 80
 Ingebright Lake, birds 40
 Kamsack, CBC 12, CMC 55, lepidoptera 81
 Kazan Lake, birds 107
 Kelvington, birds 63, CBC 12, CMC 55
 Kenaston, CBC 12, CMC 55
 Killdeer, lepidoptera 79
 Kindersley, CBC 12, CMC 55
 Kinloch, CBC 12
 Kinoosao, lepidoptera 83
 Kutawagan Lake, CBC 12, CMC 55
 Lake Diefenbaker, birds 38
 Lake Athabasca, birds 36, 161
 LaRonge, CBC 12, CMC 55, lepidoptera 83
 Lashburn, lepidoptera 81
 Last Mountain Lake N.W.A., birds 61, 106, 110, 161, CBC 12, CMC 56
 Lavallee Lake, birds 107
 Leader, birds 203, CBC 12, CMC 56
 Lenore Lake, birds 106
 Lestock, lepidoptera 81
 Little Quill Lake, birds 75
 Livelong, CBC 12
 Lloydminster, lepidoptera 80
 Loon Lake, CBC 12, CMC 56, lepidoptera 82
 Love, lepidoptera 79
 Love-Torch River, CBC 12, CMC 56
 Lumsden, birds 86, 186
 Luseland, CBC 13, CMC 56
 MacDowall, CBC 13, CMC 56
 Manitou Lake, birds 38
 Marsden, CBC 13, CMC 56
 McDonaugh Lake, birds 40
 Meadow Lake, CBC 13
 Meadow Lake Provincial Park, lepidoptera 80, mammals 219, photo 220
 Melfort, CBC 13, CMC 56
 Melville, CBC 13, CMC 56
 Middle Quill Lake, birds 75, 104
 Missinipe, CBC 13
 Montague Lake, birds 40
 Moose Jaw, CBC 13, CMC 57
 Moose Mountain, CBC 13, CMC 57
 Mortlach, lepidoptera 83
 Mouse Mountain Provincial Park, lepidoptera 79, mammals 214
 Mud Lake, birds 75, 106
 Muskiki-to-Lenore Lakes, birds 40
 Nicolle Flats, CBC 13, CMC 57
 Nipawin, CBC 13, lepidoptera 80
 Nipawin Provincial Park, lepidoptera 80
 Old Wives Lake, birds 106
 Onion Lake, lepidoptera 82
 Otter Rapids, lepidoptera 83
 Patterson Lake, lepidoptera 82
 Pelican Narrows, lepidoptera 83
 Peter Pond Lake, birds 107
 Piapot, lepidoptera 83
 Pike Lake, CBC 13, CMC 57, lepidoptera 84, mammals 60
 Pinehouse Lake, lepidoptera 80
 Porcupine Plain, CBC 13
 Preston Lake, birds 106
 Primrose Lake, birds 106
 Prince Albert, CBC 13, CMC 57, lepidoptera 82, birds 178
 Prince Albert National Park, CBC 13, CMC 52, mammals 122
 Qu'Appelle Valley Dam, birds 38, CBC 13, CMC 57
 Raymore, CBC 13, CMC 57
 Red Earth, lepidoptera 79
 Redberry Lake, birds 40
 Reed Lake, birds 106
 Regina, birds 85, 91, 154, 161, 187, 201, 206, 208, 229, CBC 13, CMC 57
 Regina Beach, birds 31, 34, CBC 13, CMC 58
 Roche Percee, lepidoptera 80
 Rosefield, lepidoptera 81
 Rosthern, mammals 122
 Round Lake, CBC 13, CMC 58
 Sandoff Lake, birds 40
 Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park, lepidoptera 83
 Saskatoon, birds 89, 91, 210, 229, CBC 13, CMC 58, lepidoptera 79,

- 81, 83
 Scott, CBC 14, CMC 58
 Shoal Lake, lepidoptera 80
 Skull Creek, CBC 14, CMC 52
 Snipe Lake, birds 229
 Snowden, CBC 14, CMC 58
 Somme, birds 72
 Somme - Neely Lake, CBC 14,
 CMC 58, lepidoptera 81
 South Saskatchewan River,
 photos 138-142
 Spalding, CBC 14, CMC 58
 Spinney Hill, CBC 14, CMC 58
 Spring Valley, CBC 14, CMC 58
 Spruce Home, CBC 14, CMC 58
 Squaw Rapids, CBC 14, CMC 58
 Stoughton, lepidoptera 83
 Sturgeon Landing, lepidoptera 81
 Suggi Lake, birds 106
 Swift Current, CBC 14, CMC 59,
 lepidoptera 79
 Tantallon, lepidoptera 81
 Tisdale, CBC 14, birds 186
 Tompkins, lepidoptera 81
 Turtle Lake, CBC 14, CMC 59
 Val Marie, 129, CBC 14, CMC 59,
 insects 196, lepidoptera 79
 Wakaw Lake, mammals 122
 Wasekamio Lake, birds 106
 Waskesiu, lepidoptera 81
 Weekes, lepidoptera 82
 West Coteau Lake, birds 40
 Weyburn, birds 102, 153, 155,
 CBC 14, CMC 59
 White Bear, CBC 14, CMC 59
 Whitewood, CBC 14, CMC 59
 Wildcat Hill Wilderness Area,
 lepidoptera 80
 Willowbunch Lake, birds 40
 Yorkton, birds 63, CBC 14, CMC 59
 Schmeiser, Douglas A., photo 234
 Thoughts of a perceptive Blue Jay.
 photos, 89-90
 Schroeder, Curt, photo 234
Scotogramma addenda - Added
 Scotogramma 80
Scotogramma fervida - Fervid
 Scotogramma 80
 Scott, Lorne
 Greater Yellowlegs, photo 256
 Seguin, Randolph J.
 Unexplained death of a Black Bear.
 219
 Black Bear, photo 220, 221
 Shadick, Stan
 Nature Saskatchewan Fellow 231,
 photo 231, 234
Shepherdia argentea - buffaloberry 129
 Shrew, American Water 52
 Shrew, Water 73
 Shrike, Loggerhead 30
 Shrike, Northern 20
Sideridis maryx - Ruby Penman 80
Sideridis rosea - Rosy Penman 80,
 photo 80
 Siskin, Pine 20, 116, 155
 Skeel, Margaret A. and Dale Hjertaas
 Saskatchewan results of the 1991
 International Piping Plover
 Census. 36
 Skua, South Polar 157
 Slimmon, Jim, photo 236
 Snake, Bull 130
 Snake, Garter 130, 197
 Snow Bunting 10
 Solitaire, Townsend 201
 Sparrow, Baird's 30
 Sparrow, Grasshopper 30
 Sparrow, Harris' 29
 Sparrow, House 10, 93, 155, 217
 Sparrow, Lark 30
 Sparrow, Lincoln's 11
 Sparrow, White-crowned 29
 Sparrow, White-throated 204, 217,
 sketch 205
 Sperling, Felix A.
 Twenty-seven years of butterfly
 observations at Fish Butte,
 Alberta. 132
Speyeria atlantis - Atlantis Fritillary 135
Speyeria callippe - Callippe Fritillary 134
Speyeria edwardsi - Edwards' Fritillary
 134
Speyeria electa - Electa Fritillary 135
Speyeria hydaspe - Hydaspe Fritillary
 133
Speyeria mormonia - Mormon Fritillary
 135
Speyeria zerene - Zerene Fritillary 134
 Squirrel, European Red 127, sketch 127
 Squirrel, Fox 150
 Squirrel, Gray 217
 Squirrel, Northern Flying 215
 Squirrel, Red 127, 150, 217, 226,
 sketch 127, photo 218
 Squirrel, Richardson's Ground 52
 Squirrel, Southern Flying 215
 Starling, sketch 205
 Starling, European 20
Stretchia muricina - Brown Spectacles 84

Stretchia plusiaeformis - Grey
Spectacles 83
Swallow, Tree 49
Swallow, Violet Green 230
Switzer, Frank, photo 234
Symphoricarpos sp. - snowberry 33

T
Tanager, Hepatic 47
Tanager, Summer 47, photo 48
Taylor, Peter
Female Sachem near East Braintree,
MB, photo 194, 195
Mid-continental jaegers: a Manitoba
perspective. 157
The Sachem, a new skipper for
Manitoba and the Prairie
Provinces. 193

Tholera americana - White-lined
American 83
Thornton, Fred, Joce Bowman, and
David Struthers
Agricultural policy review part 1:
gross revenue insurance plan. 5
Agricultural policy review part 2:
Wheat Board quota system. 65

Thrush, Varied 11, 201
Thorybes pylades - Northern Cloudy
Wing 134
Thymelicus lineola - European Skipper
193
Trichoclea antica - Antica Penman 84
Trichoclea artesta - Brown and White
Penman 80
Trichoclea positca - Postica Penman 80
Tricholita signata - Signate Quaker 84
Turkey, Wild 29
Turtle, Western Painted 129

U
Ulolonche orbiculata - Orbiculate Stylus
83

USA
Alaska, birds 170
Iowa, birds 118
Kansas, birds 161
Michigan, birds 88
Minnesota, birds 31, 88, 118, 160,
167, 171
Montana, lepidoptera 84
Nebraska, birds 118
North Carolina, birds 204
North Dakota, birds 117, 157, 160,
171
South Dakota, birds 118, 160
Texas, birds 203

Wisconsin, birds 88, 118

V
Vanderburgh, David C.
Great Gray Owl - Webb Lake,
Manitoba. 165
Manitoba Hydro accomodates Osprey
activity. 173
Manitoba Hydro crew remove Osprey
nest from power pole, photo, 173
Nest on pole, photo, 176
New location of Osprey, photo, 174
Osprey-friendly timbers, photo, 175
Vanessa anabella - West Coast Lady 135
Vanessa atalanta - Red Admiral 135
Vanessa cardui - Painted Lady 133
Vermette, Louise
Male House Finch visiting feeder in
Winnipeg, photo 114
Vireo, Yellow-throated 112
Vulture, Black 105
Vulture, Turkey 105

W
Walker, Ed, photo 234
Walley, William J.
Summer Tanager at Dauphin, Manitoba.
47
Summer Tanager, photo 48
An unusual encounter with the Canada
Lynx. 181
Wapple, Robert
The urban Rock Wren. 210
Warbler, Black-and-White 112
Warbler, Black-throated Blue 112
Warbler, Canada, photo 109
Warbler, Golden-winged 112
Warbler, Hooded 154
Warbler, Magnolia, photo 110
Warbler, Nashville 72
Warbler, Orange-crowned 112
Warbler, Tennessee 112
Warbler, Yellow-rumped 112
Warkentin, Ian G.
Merlin with prey, photo 92
The wintering Merlins of Saskatoon. 91
Wasp, Yellowjacket 86
Waterthrush, Northern 112
Waxwing, Bohemian 20, 93
Waxwing, Cedar 20
Weasel, Long-tailed 179
Weasel, Prairie 179
Wedgwood, Jim
Nature Saskatchewan Fellow 231,
photo 233
Wheatear, Northern 229

Wilde, Gerry
Possible hybridization between Blue
Jays and Steller's Jays. 87
Williams, Michael, photo 234
Wilson, Scott
Native prairie and biodiversity in
Saskatchewan. 1
Wolverines 178
Wolves 178
Woodchuck, photo 230
Woodpecker, Downy 20

Woodpecker, Hairy 20
Woodpecker, Pileated 20
Wren, Rock 210
Wright, D. H.
Update on the Violet Green Swallow at
Saskatoon. 229

Y
Yellowlegs, Greater 104, photo 256
Yellowlegs, Lesser 104



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